

THE POLITICS OF TATAR NATIONALISM AND RUSSIAN FEDERALISM: 1992-1999

Oktaý Fırat Tanrısever

Ph.D. Thesis

School of Slavonic and East European Studies
University College London

2002



Thesis Abstract

The topic of this thesis is Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership, analysed through its politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism between 1992 and 1999. The main question of the thesis is how Tatarstan's leadership has succeeded in maintaining political power and gaining economic wealth without provoking a backlash both from Moscow and the local Russian population.

The thesis argues that Tatarstan's leadership succeeded in maintaining political power and gaining economic wealth through promoting neither the civic nationalism of participating citizens in Tatarstan nor the ethnic nationalism of the Tatar nation bound together by common culture and history, but *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* which demands national autonomy for the Tatars as the only formula for Tatarstan's leadership to secure regional stability against ethnic nationalisms of the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan and the adverse regional effects of the federal policies. The thesis considers the weaknesses of the Russian federal centre and Tatarstan's civil society as the main factors enabling Tatarstan's leadership to pursue a politics of survival through manipulating Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism.

The thesis begins with an introduction setting out the approach and the argument. The first main chapter examines the historical evolution of Russia's relations with the Tatar elites both in the Tsarist and the Soviet periods. Chapter Two analyses the President of Tatarstan Mintimer Shaimiev's discourse of Tatar nationalism, and demonstrates how Shaimiev's policies served to Tatarise the leading positions in Tatarstan without a backlash from the Russians. Chapter Three deals with Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism vis-à-vis Moscow before and after the conclusion of the power-sharing treaty between Moscow and Tatarstan in 1994. Chapter Four explores society and culture in Tatarstan to account for the weaknesses of Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms. The fifth chapter evaluates the stability of Tatarstan's arrangements with Moscow in terms of the trends at the intergovernmental and interethnic levels. The thesis concludes by showing how Tatar nationalism under Shaimiev has accommodated itself with Russian federalism.

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List of Abbreviations

ANRT: The Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan
CDPSP: Current Digest of Post-Soviet Press
ChK: Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counterrevolution, Sabotage and Speculation
CIS: Commonwealth of Independent States
CPD: Congress of People's Deputies
CPRF: Communist Party of the Russian Federation
CPSU: Communist Party of the Soviet Union
DUMES: Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of the European Part of Russia and Siberia
FSB: Federal Security Service
FSK: Federal Counterintelligence Service
GKChP: State Committee for the State of Emergency
Izbirkom: Electoral Commission
KamAZ: Kama Automobile Factory
KGB: Committee of State Security
Komsomol: Young Communist League
LDPR: Liberal Democratic Party of Russia
MVD: Ministry of Internal Affairs
Narkomnats: People's Commissariat of Nationalities
NDR: Our Home is Russia
NKVD: People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs
Obkom: Regional Committee
OGPU: United Main Political Administration (Security Police)
OKChN: National Congress of the Chechen Nation
OVR: Fatherland-All Russia
RAN: The Russian Academy of Sciences
RCP(b): Russian Communist Party (bolsheviks)
Revkom: Revolutionary Committee
RFE/RL: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
RSFSR: Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic
Sovnarkom: Council of People's Commissars (the Soviet Government under Lenin and Stalin)
TAIF: Tatar-American Investments and Finances Company
TASSR: Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
Tatneft: Tatar Oil Company
TOTs: Tatar Public Centre (It was renamed as VTOTs in 1992)
TsDUMR: The Central Spiritual Board of Muslims of Russia
TsIK: Central Executive Committee
TSSR: Tatar Soviet Socialist Republic
USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VTOTs: All-Tatar Public Centre
VTsIOM: All-Russian Centre for Public Opinion Studies
WCT: World Congress of Tatars

Acknowledgements

I could not have completed this research without the support of many people from the Russian Federation, Britain, the United States and Turkey. Among these, I am particularly grateful to Prof. Leokadia M. Drobizheva, Chairperson of the Political Anthropology Department at the Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Dr. Rafael S. Khakimov, Chief Advisor to the President of Tatarstan and the Director of the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan, Prof. Indus R. Tagirov, Chairperson of the World Congress of Tatars, Dr. Rafik M. Abdurakhmanov, Chairperson of the Volga-Ural Centre for Conflict Regulation, Razil I. Valeev, Deputy in the Parliament of Tatarstan, Rafael F. Mukhammetdinov, the founder of the Tatar National Independence Party – *Ittifak*, Prof. Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Chairperson of the Department of Political Science at the Kazan State University, Prof. Agdas Kh. Burganov from the Department of History at the Russian State Humanities University, Dr. Aleksandr G. Ossipov, Chairperson of the Centre for Ethnic Studies at the International Institute for Humanities and Political Studies in Moscow, Dr. Damir M. Iskhakov from the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan, Prof. Nikolai V. Ponomarev and Dr. Natalia E. Kraeva from the Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities named after George Soros in Kazan, Prof. Uli Schamiloglu, Chairperson of the Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia at the University of Wisconsin, Ravil Bukharaev from the Russian Service of BBC, and the staff of the Libraries of SSEES, Tatarstan's National Library, Kazan State University and Lenin Library in Moscow. I am also grateful to my hosts in Kazan and Moscow for providing the best examples of hospitality. I would also like to thank the Higher Education Council of Turkey for the scholarship enabling me to come and study in Britain for four consecutive years.

I would like to thank Dr. Peter J. S. Duncan for supervising my research and providing me with precious information, advice and encouragement. He has been an exemplary scholar to me. My special thanks also go to Dr. Martin McCauley for being very much supportive of this research, and Anatol Lieven and Dr. Abby Innes for their comments on the earlier version of this thesis.

My thanks also go to Dr. Dafne Ter-Sakarian, Dr. Maria Lenn, Catherine Matthews, Anka Sahin, Alkim Bag and my colleagues at the Department of International Relations at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, where I work as a Lecturer, for their friendship. I would like to record my special thanks to Prof. Y. Atila Eralp, Chairperson of the Department of International Relations at the Middle East Technical University, for his encouragement and understanding during the crucial final stages.

I am deeply thankful to my parents Ali and Fatma Tanrisever and my brother Sabri Tanrisever for their unwavering support throughout my life. This thesis is dedicated to my wife Hezar Tanrisever for her unselfish love and immense patience throughout this research.

Acknowledgement of Published Work

An earlier version of Chapter 3 was published as Oktay F. Tanrisever, 'The Impact of the 1994 Tatar-Russian Power Sharing Treaty on the Formation of Post-Soviet Tatar National Identity', *Slovo*, vol.13, no.1, 2001, pp.43-60.

Note on Transliteration

In the transliteration of non-English words, the rules pertaining to the Library of Congress transliteration system are followed throughout, except where Russophone scholars are cited using a different system. In those cases, their choices are respected. Place names in Tatarstan have been transliterated from their most familiar Russian rather than Tatar versions (Naberezhnye Chelny rather than Iar Chally). Soft signs at the end of words are omitted, so Kazan is used instead of Kazan'. Older administrative terms have been used in their historical forms. Thus, Tatariia has been used in the Tsarist and Soviet contexts while Tatarstan is used in the post-Soviet context.

Introduction

Tatarstan, a republic in the Russian Federation (Maps 1 and 2), has posed one of the most formidable challenges to Moscow's authority in the post-Soviet era. When the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, many radical Tatar nationalists were demanding independence for Tatarstan. In this atmosphere, it seemed likely that a violent ethnic conflict would erupt between the two main ethnic groups of the Republic: the Tatars and the Russians. Equally alarming was the fact that the situation was not any better at the intergovernmental level. Moscow was not certain about the real intentions of Tatarstan's leadership, who refused to sign the Federation Treaty of 1992, and instead held a referendum on the status of the Republic in March 1992. In this referendum, 61.4 percent of the voters approved the proposal of Tatarstan's leadership that 'the Republic of Tatarstan is a sovereign state, the subject of international law, forming its relations with the Russian Federation, other Republics and states on the basis of equal agreements'.¹

Contrary to the expectations of Tatar ethnic nationalists, however, a compromise was finally reached between Moscow and Tatarstan when they signed a power-sharing treaty granting a special status to Tatarstan in the Russian Federation on 15 February 1994. It seems paradoxical that although Tatarstan's leadership secured more autonomy for the Republic by claiming the rights of the Tatar nation, this did not prevent them from suppressing some Tatar nationalists for promoting 'ethnic hatred'. Moreover, there has not been any serious backlash both from Moscow and the Russians in Tatarstan in response to the increasing autonomy of Tatarstan from Moscow and to the Tatarisation of the Republican administration in the post-Treaty period.

The topic of this thesis is the post-Soviet leadership of Tatarstan, analysed through its politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism between 1992 and 1999. The main research question is how Tatarstan's leadership has succeeded in maintaining political power and gaining economic wealth without provoking a backlash both from Moscow

and the local Russian population during this period. In other words, the thesis seeks to explore what kind of nationalism and federalism Tatarstan's leadership has promoted in order to achieve its objectives. The thesis also questions how stable the institutional arrangements of Tatarstan's leadership are with Moscow and the authority of Tatarstan's leadership is over the population in Tatarstan.

Why Tatarstan?

There are several characteristics of Tatarstan that make it an important topic for a case study on the politics of nationalism and federalism. To begin with, among the non-Russian peoples of Russia, the Tatars became the first people colonised by Moscow when the Russian Tsar Ivan IV conquered the Kazan Khanate in 1552. This is a historic milestone that marks the beginning of Russian imperial expansion. The formation of the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (TASSR) in 1920 did not change the imperial relationship between Moscow and the Tatar elites. It is, therefore, important to explore the impact of the imperial heritage on the forms of Tatar nationalism and Tatarstan's federal relations with Moscow.

Moreover, Tatarstan's demographic and economic characteristics make it a very appropriate case to explore the politics of nationalism in the post-Soviet regional context. In terms of its demographic composition, Tatarstan enjoys a special place among the ethnic republics of the Russian Federation. Tatarstan's population of 3.6 million includes Tatars (48.5 percent) and Russians (43.3 percent). However, only 32 percent of the Tatars in Russia actually live in Tatarstan. It should also be noted that excluding the Ukrainians, whose homeland is outside the Russian Federation, the Tatars are Russia's largest national minority, numbering 5.5 million in 1989 out of a total population of 147.0 million (3.8 percent).² In addition to this complex demographic situation that makes the development of any nationalist movement very complicated, the struggle for the control of Tatarstan's considerable deposits of oil, mainly in its Romashkinskoe, Pervomaiskoe and Bondiuzhskoe districts, has required the Republican leadership to combine economic

¹ *Moscow News*, 25 March 1992.

² Damir M. Iskhakov, *Tatary: Populiarnyi ocherk etnicheskoi istorii i demografii*, Naberezhnye Chelny: KamAZ, 1993, pp.18-21.

and national factors in its own unique way for the survival of its rule in the post-Soviet era.³ The analysis of Tatarstan's post-Soviet experience could reveal what kind of nationalism is promoted by Tatarstan's leadership in order to maintain its political power and gain economic wealth in the multinational context of the Republic.

Furthermore, Tatarstan is the first federal unit of the Russian Federation that was able to gain a special status in the Russian Federation following the signing of the power-sharing treaty on 15 February 1994. The study of Tatarstan's post-Soviet challenge to Moscow's rule could highlight Moscow's post-Soviet strengths and weaknesses in dealing with regional demands for greater autonomy. The study of Tatarstan's federal relationship with Moscow could also demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of Tatarstan's leadership in manipulating Tatar nationalism through its informal practices within the formal framework of Russian federalism. In this respect, it is very important to examine whether the Treaty has effectively marginalized all the different forms of Tatar nationalism or not.

Another characteristic of Tatarstan is that Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership has promoted its own version of nationalism in an ethnically-heterogeneous society characterised by the diversity in Tatar and Russian visions of national identity, history and society. The complex history of the relations between the Tatars and the Russians in the Republic have resulted in the high levels of religious tolerance, bilingualism, mixed marriages and urbanisation as well as the state-dependent economy and a weak civil society. In this respect, the political weakness of ethnic nationalism and religious fanaticism in Tatarstan's ethnically and religiously heterogeneous society deserves an explanation.

Last but not least, Tatarstan's relations with Moscow could serve as a prism for analysing the impact of the 'Tatarstan model' on the post-Soviet development of Russian federalism. Moscow's practice of signing bilateral treaties with its federal units, which started with the Tatarstan Treaty in 1994, resulted in the signing of 46 bilateral treaties by the year 1999. These treaties have given preferential treatment to the signatory regions. An analysis of Tatarstan's federal relations with Moscow could demonstrate whether

³ Marat R. Mustafin and Rashid G. Khuzeev, *Vse o Tatarstane (Ekonomiko-geograficheskii spravochnik)*, Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1994, pp.49-50.

these relations have strengthened the formal principles of democratic federalism or served to camouflage the corrupt and informal practices of Boris El'tsin and Mintimer Shaimiev, Russian and Tatar Presidents respectively.

This thesis focuses mainly on the El'tsin period from the emergence of the Russian Federation as a new political entity in 1992 until El'tsin's resignation from the Presidency on 31 December 1999. The Tsarist and the Soviet periods will be examined briefly to identify the historical background of the relations between the Tatars and Moscow. The policies of Vladimir Putin, who replaced El'tsin, will be discussed briefly in Chapter Five in order to evaluate the stability of El'tsin's federal arrangements with Shaimiev in the post-El'tsin era.

Nationalism and Its Variants

In order to explore the post-Soviet politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism, I shall first conceptualise nationalism as a political phenomenon, and relate it to the institutional politics of federalism. Next, the existing taxonomies of nationalism will be discussed in terms of their capacity to explain the existing forms of post-Soviet nationalism. Based on a critical review of the literature on Tatarstan's post-Soviet experience, I will put forward my argument on how to explain the politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism promoted by Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership.

To conceptualise nationalism as a political phenomenon, I borrow John Breuilly's definition of nationalism because of its capacity to explain the concept of nationalism in its political context. Breuilly conceived nationalism as something that 'is, above and beyond all else, about politics', and he adds that 'politics is about power'.⁴ For Breuilly, nationalism refers to political movements seeking or exercising state power and justifying such action with nationalist arguments. In this sense, 'nationalist' action and argument are assumed to derive from a doctrine with three basic assertions, that

- (a) There exists a nation with an explicit and peculiar character
- (b) The interests and values of this nation take priority over all other interests and values
- (c) The nation must be as independent as possible. This usually requires at least the attainment of political sovereignty.⁵

This political conception of nationalism assumes that there is no single nationalism for any one nation but rather multiple nationalisms with differing ideologies and social constituencies. Moreover, the social support for any form of nationalism varies among social groups due to the diversity of their interests. Among these social groups, elites occupy a special place in the politics of nationalism since they are very influential in organising and manipulating nationalist movements. Leokadia Drobizheva defines elites as,

[T]hose segments of the population that make strategic decisions because of their official status, or that, using their unofficial authority, directly affect the making of decisions that control the functioning of society.⁶

Although there are economic and cultural elites apart from political elites, I will use elites and political leadership interchangeably in this thesis unless stated otherwise.

Nevertheless, elites cannot always reach a consensus over the content of nationalism because of their conflicting interests. Just like the factions in central elites, local elites could contest the dominant discourse of nationalism promoted by the ruling central elites. The politics of nationalism took shape mainly in the relationship between central and local elites, which is regulated institutionally either through a direct rule or through an indirect rule. Direct rule emerges in unitary states, where central elites seek to secure the political loyalty of local elites to the central state through promoting a nation-wide cultural uniformity. On the other hand, indirect rule emerges in imperial or federal states, where central elites control the local population through the mediation of local elites. This type of rule generally recognises the cultural differences of the local elites and masses from the central elites.⁷

⁴ John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, (hereafter, *Nationalism and the State*), 2nd ed., Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993, p.1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.2.

⁶ Leokadia M. Drobizheva, 'Comparison of Elite Groups in Tatarstan, Sakha, Magadan and Orenburg', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.15, no.4, 1999, pp.387-388.

In this sense, indirect rule serves to inhibit the development of nationalism among the local population through co-opting local elites. Nevertheless, the mediating role of local elites varies depending on the type of indirect rule. Under the imperial indirect rule, local elites serve the imperial centre without enjoying any legally guaranteed autonomy. Michael Doyle defines empires as 'relationships of political control imposed by some political societies over the effective sovereignty of other political societies'.⁸ The imperial relationship makes the imperial centre multinational since empires recruit 'mediating elites' drawn from the indigenous colonial society. Federations institute the type of indirect rule that grants legally guaranteed autonomy to the regions. Under the federal indirect rule, local elites could make final decisions on some regional matters. William Riker defines federation as,

a political organisation in which the activities of government are divided between regional governments and a central government in such a way that each kind of government has some activities on which it makes final decisions.⁹

Since local elites represent regional as well as federal interests in federations, the federal relationship invariably requires local elites to negotiate the relationship between central elites and the regional population.¹⁰ In other words, local elites play a very important role in containing the growth of nationalism both in empires and federations as long as local elites are controlled by the central elites.

From this point of view, it can be claimed that the collapse of an imperial or a federal indirect rule gives the dissatisfied local elites an opportunity to mobilise the local masses through their nationalist movements. Ernest Gellner stated this as follows: '[n]ationalism gets its chance when the non-ethnic imperial structures collapse'.¹¹ Nevertheless, it is not always certain that the local opposition forces could use this opportunity successfully in empires or in federations.

⁷ Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p.40.

⁸ Michael W. Doyle, *Empires*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986, p.38.

⁹ William H. Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance*, Boston: Little Brown, 1964, p.11.

¹⁰ In fact, the term 'federation' comes etymologically from the Latin word '*foederatus*' which means 'bound by treaty' deriving from *foedus* (treaty) and *fidere* (to trust). Daniel J. Elazar, *Exploring Federalism*, Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1987, p.5.

¹¹ Ernest Gellner, *Anthropology and Politics: Revolution in the Sacred Grove*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1995, p.6.

In order to examine the characteristics of Tatar nationalism promoted by Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership, we need to identify whether the existing taxonomies of nationalism are capable of explaining the politics of post-Soviet nationalism. Concerning their origins, nationalisms have been categorised into the 'ancient' and 'modern' types. Nationalisms have also been treated as taking the forms of 'unification', 'minority' and 'nationalising state' nationalisms in terms of the relationship between the nation and the state. Finally, nationalisms have been classified into 'civic' and 'ethnic' types in terms of their strategies of linking the nation to the individual.

As for the ancient and modern types of modern types of nationalism, the ancient type of nationalism is used to describe nationalisms that have their roots in old and deeply felt ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural differences, albeit transmitted into modern forms. This view assumes that the world was divided into nations well before modernity. For example, Anthony D. Smith argues that modern nations cannot be understood without exploring their ethnic origins. Smith defines the nation as:

a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.¹²

For Smith, 'modern nations simply extend, deepen and streamline the ways in which members of *ethnie* (ancient ethnic communities) associated and communicated', by adding higher levels of territorial and political organisation to the community.¹³ Smith defines nationalism as 'an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining the autonomy, unity and identity of a nation. Nationalism is an ideology of the nation, not the state'.¹⁴ In this way, Smith considered ethno-cultural values of ancient nations as the basis of their nationalism.

The modern type of nationalism is used to describe nationalisms that are invented by nationalist elites in order to forge modern societies out of local cultural traditions. For example, Ernest Gellner defined nationalism primarily as 'a political principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent'.¹⁵ For Gellner, nationalism

¹² *Ibid.*, p.14.

¹³ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, p.215.

¹⁴ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, London: Penguin, 1991, p.74.

¹⁵ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983, p.1.

engenders nations, and not the other way around.¹⁶ In this sense, nations have been 'created' either by turning the 'low', spontaneous and oral cultures into literate and cultivated ones, or by imposing the existing 'high' culture on the available and diverse idioms of peasants. On the other hand, Marxist theories related nationalism to the development of capitalism and its internal contradictions.¹⁷ Eric J. Hobsbawm argued that 'nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way round'.¹⁸ Nevertheless, contrary to Hobsbawm's theory, which asserted that ultimately nationalism would disappear with the decline of the nation state, we have witnessed the revival of nationalism and the collapse of communism since 1989.

It is, however, problematic to categorise all forms of post-Soviet nationalism strictly as either ancient or modern. Although the Soviet Union was home to various primordial nations, those nations in Central Asia were created in the modern period. Soviet leaders implemented their policies of nation building (*natsional'noe stroitel'stvo*) through defining the rights of nations, as *officially* recognised by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. For example, Joseph Stalin, who was chosen by Lenin to formulate the Communist Party's official view of nationalism, defined nation as 'a historically evolved stable community based on a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture'.¹⁹ This view of nationhood is still influential in the post-Soviet period. Although the Tatars form an ancient nation, just like the Russians, some post-Soviet Tatar or Russian leaders tend to blend ancient and modern elements of nationhood in designing their own versions of nationalism for pragmatic reasons because, as Valerie Bunce argues, in the post-Soviet transition process 'what is open for negotiation is not just the character of the regime but also the very nature of the state itself, not just citizenship but also identity'.²⁰

The existing taxonomies of nationalism that relate the nation to the state do not cover the types of post-Soviet nationalism adequately either. Rogers Brubaker categorised the nationalisms that have resulted from the redrawing of boundaries following the break-up

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.55.

¹⁷ Walter Connor, *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, pp.1-5.

¹⁸ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1789*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p.10.

¹⁹ Joseph Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow: Progress, 1974, p.31.

of the Soviet Union into three distinct and mutually antagonistic nationalisms. The first type of nationalism is 'nationalising state nationalism' which refers to ethnically heterogeneous nation-states, whose dominant elites promote the language, culture, demographic position, economic flourishing and political hegemony of the nominally state-bearing nation.²¹ The second type of nationalism is 'minority nationalism' that emerges mainly as a reaction to the 'nationalising state nationalism'. The last type is the 'external homeland nationalism', which seeks to protect the minorities from assimilation due to the existence of shared nationhood across political boundaries.²²

However, it is very contentious to claim that all forms of post-Soviet nationalism promote either nationalising state or minority or external homeland nationalism. Of course, many post-Soviet states have embarked on the process of nation-building, as Taras Kuzio argues, they cannot be easily labelled as promoting 'nationalising state' nationalism.²³ In fact, the ruling elites of these states seek to prevent the masses from using nationalism against themselves. Moreover, although there are separatist nationalists in many parts of the post-Soviet space, such as Abkhazia and Chechnia, some regions, such as Crimea and Tatarstan, simply demand greater autonomy from the political centre. So, not all regions seek to secede completely. Furthermore, in the case of the Russians abroad, there are significant political groups both in Russia and among the Russian communities in the Baltic States who are against external homeland nationalism. These evidences weaken the explanatory capacity of Brubaker's categorisation of nationalism.

Finally, the categorisation of existing forms of nationalism into 'civic' and 'ethnic' types in terms of the relationship between the nation and the individual is not adequate to explore some types of post-Soviet nationalism. This categorisation stems from the fact that in order to mobilise individuals for nationalist goals, substantive symbols, images and shared historical experiences are needed. These symbols may be either civic or ethnic in character. Civic nationalism defines nationhood with citizenship and political participation. It seeks to promote social cohesion and political equality in ethnically

²⁰ Valerie Bunce, 'Should Transitologists Be Grounded?', *Slavic Review*, vol.54, no.1, 1995, p.125.

²¹ Rogers Brubaker, 'National Minorities, Nationalising States, and External Homelands in New Europe', *Daedalus*, vol.124, no.2, 1995, p.109.

²² Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, (hereafter, *Nationalism Reframed*), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p.44.

heterogeneous political communities through citizenship rights and democracy rather than ethnic ties. Therefore, civic nationalism requires well-developed political and legal institutions to regulate relations and distribute political power across ethnic as well as other social boundaries.²⁴ On the other hand, ethnic nationalism defines nationhood with a myth of shared physical characteristics, culture, religion, language and common ancestry. Ethnic nationalism has nothing to do with individual will, but instead it derives from cultural values. Individuals of different ethnicity even though they are citizens of the state in question, do not belong to the same nation.²⁵

The idea of civic nationalism is rooted in the principle that national identity can be acquired or abandoned depending on one's free will. In this sense, for Liah Greenfeld, nationalism can be understood as '[t]he form in which democracy appeared in the world, contained in the idea of nation as a butterfly in a cocoon'.²⁶ Rather than defining nationalism by its modernity, Greenfeld sees modernity as defined by nationalism. In this sense, nationalist behaviour could emerge as a result of the drive of nations to secure their equality vis-à-vis other nations. However, as Greenfeld observes, not all nationalisms are individualistic. Collectivistic nationalisms define nation as a collective individual, endowed with a will and interest of its own, which are independent of and take priority over the wills and interests of human individuals within the nation. They tend to be authoritarian and imply a fundamental inequality between elites (a small group of self-appointed interpreters of the will of the nation) and the masses (those who have to adapt to the elite's interpretations).²⁷

It should be noted that such collective nationalisms could be either civic as in the case of French nationalism, or ethnic as in the case of German nationalism.²⁸ In his study of the citizenship laws in France and in Germany, Rogers Brubaker identified that in France, citizenship is defined as a territorial community based on the *ius soli* (the law of the soil)

²³ Taras Kuzio, "Nationalising States" or Nation-Building? A Critical Review of the Theoretical Literature and Empirical Evidence', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.7, no.2, 2001, p.150.

²⁴ Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, p.73.

²⁵ Walter Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, pp.185-210.

²⁶ Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992, p.10.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.15-21.

territorial jurisdiction principle. The French case is the example of civic nationalism in the sense that the national feeling grew out of the state and its institutions. In Germany, by contrast, citizenship is formed on the basis of a community of descent, on the *ius sanguinis* (the law of blood) principle. German national sentiments preceded the emergence of a state and adopted the character of the *volk* (people). Ethnic nationalism sees nationality as determined genetically, entirely independent of individual choice, and thus inherent. Brubaker concludes that the French model is state-centred and assimilationist, while the German model is people-centred and differentialist.²⁹

Nevertheless, post-Soviet nations are not likely to go the way of the West and develop into liberal democracies, supported by the civic idea of nationhood or to develop strong ethnic nationalist movements. Without discussing to what extent the types of post-Soviet nationalism can be described as ethnic nationalism, some scholars, such as Anatoly Khazanov, assert that ethnic nationalism is emerging in the post-Soviet space like 'steam from a pressure cooker.'³⁰ Similarly, George Schöpflin linked the 'rise of ethnic nationalism' in the post-Communist world, for which it is very hard to find empirical evidence (except for former Yugoslavia), to the underdevelopment of civil society.³¹ Contrary to these assertions, however, it is precisely the weakness of civil society that has made ethnic nationalism weak in post-Soviet societies, since it is very difficult to form nationalist movements in the absence of a strong civil society. Moreover, the ruling elites of these societies, who seek to maintain their ethnic privileges, do not support either ethnic or civic nationalism; since both of which imply equality and therefore, the levelling of their group status with that of the rest of the population.

Thus, it can be argued that the attractiveness of ethnic nationalism for regional elites in post-Soviet Russian Federation seems to be exaggerated. It is also mistaken to identify secessionism with ethnic nationalism. In fact, a secessionist outcome may be the culmination of various struggles other than ethnic struggles. As Abby Innes argues, the

²⁸ On the emergence of French nationalism, see Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1976.

²⁹ Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1992, pp.1-17.

³⁰ Anatoly M. Khazanov, 'Ethnic Nationalism in the Russian Federation', *Daedalus*, vol.124, no.2, 1997, p.121.

³¹ George Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity, Power: The New Politics of Europe*, London: Hurst & Co., 2000, p.6.

Czech and Slovak states became independent because of elite and not public support in Czechoslovakia, where ethnic nationalism was considerably weak by 1991.³² Besides, the nation-evoking efforts of political entrepreneurs may not be always successful. As Anatol Lieven says,

While both communist and nationalist manipulators have indeed been at work in many countries, the readiness of different nations to respond to their provocations has differed enormously according to local circumstance, local history, local culture, and yes, to 'national character'.³³

From this point of view, post-Soviet Tatar nationalism and the development of Russian federalism could be explored by taking the specific characteristics of Tatarstan's history, leadership and society as well as the interests of the Russian federal leadership into account. These factors cannot be adequately analysed through the normative conceptual lenses of 'good' civic nationalism and 'bad' ethnic nationalism.³⁴ It is important, in this respect, to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the relevant literature on the politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism.

A Critique of the Literature

This thesis challenges the dominance of apolitical and normative approaches in the literature on the role of nationalism in Tatarstan's political system and in its federal relations with Moscow. There are two main schools of thought concerning the politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism in the post-Soviet era. The first school of thought, which is dominant among the Tatar scholars, views Tatarstan's drive for sovereignty as essentially a civic process. This school is associated with Rafael Khakimov, Political Advisor to the President of Tatarstan Mintimer Shaimiev and the Director of the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan. For Khakimov, the post-Soviet Tatar nation-building process is good since it is a civic project, while the Russian nation building process is bad, as it is an ethnic-based imperialist project. By contrast, the second school, which is dominant among the Russian

³² Abby Innes, 'The Breakup of Czechoslovakia: The Impact of Party Development on the Separation of the State', *East European Politics and Societies*, vol.11, no.3, 1997, p.434.

³³ Anatol Lieven, 'Anatol Lieven Replies', *National Interest*, no.50, 1997/1998, p.112.

³⁴ David Brown, 'Are There Good and Bad Nationalisms?', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.5, no.2, 1999, p.300.

scholars, argues that ethnic nationalism forms the basis of Tatarstan's drive for sovereignty and endangers the civic nation-building process in the post-Soviet Russia. This view is associated with the Director of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology Valerii Tishkov, who was the Head of the Russian State Committee on Nationalities in March-November 1992. For Tishkov, the Russian nation building process is good since it is a civic project, while the Tatar nation building process is bad, as it is an ethnic project. Calling opponents ethnic and oneself civic is a normative way of seeing the reality, since ethnic and civic forms of nationalism have been used to identify 'good' and 'bad' forms of nationalism. However, for analytical purposes, it is essential for scientists to ask whether a nationalist movement, in reality, represents a civic, ethnic or some other form of nationalism.

For Rafael Khakimov, the official version of Tatar nationalism actively promotes civic rather than the ethnic form of Tatar nationalism. Actually, during the celebration of the sixth anniversary of Tatarstan's declaration of sovereignty in August 1996, Tatarstan's President Mintimer Shaimiev described Tatarstan's society as 'a multi-ethnic and multicultural democratic community, evolving into a civic nation of *Tatarstantsy* (Tatarstanis)'.³⁵ Khakimov asserts that the version of Tatar identity being presented to the Russians and Russian-speakers in Tatarstan is a 'pluralist', 'civic' and 'non-ethnic' one since this strategy involves, in his opinion, both supporting Tatar cultural revival and defending the rights of the Russians in the Republic.

However, Tatarstan's project of nation-building cannot be seen as a 'civic' form of Tatar nationalism since Shaimiev's version of Tatar nationalism discriminates against the local Russian population, especially in the employment field. In Tatarstan, not only the Russians are marginalized, but also elites were Tatarised. Furthermore, the idea of multinationalism, which is advocated by Tatarstan's leadership, may not necessarily be civic, because ethnicity remains still its basic marker of political identity. The notion of civic national identity is quite foreign to Khakimov's general political discourse since Khakimov himself said that it is very useful to categorise people according to their ethnic background;

³⁵ Cited in Galina M. Yemelianova, 'Shaimiev's "Khanate" on the Volga and its Russian Subjects', *Asian Ethnicity*, vol.1, no.1, 2000, p.49.

Sometimes one can hear appeals to forget about ethnic origin and not to divide people according to this category. These appeals derived from the misunderstanding of the phenomenon. Ethnic features are not just wishful thinking, nor a devil's plot on the part of 'separatists'; they are destined from birth.³⁶

Another evidence that could challenge Khakimov's claim that Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership promoted a civic form of Tatar nationalism is that Tatar ethnic nationalists are suppressed and regional stability is maintained through authoritarian methods. In this sense, although Shaimiev's version of nationalism can be described as integrationist, it is not an inclusive and a civic form of nationalism, for which there should be democratic political institutions. However, the regime in Tatarstan cannot be considered fully democratic.

Besides, the belief that Tatarstan should represent the aspirations of the Tatars, which cannot be considered civic, is visible in Khakimov's line of thinking. Khakimov attempts to justify his position as follows:

the centre cannot understand that democracy for the people is meaningless without the guarantee of ethnic rights, which allows them to pursue progress in decolonisation. Democracy cannot be based on force as the source of law, in which case democracy loses its legitimacy.³⁷

I think, the main problem in Khakimov's line of thinking lies in his assumption that post-Soviet Russia has been still guided by imperial mentality that characterised the Tsarist and Soviet orientations towards Tatarstan. In this sense, Khakimov considers the emergence of sovereign Tatarstan as a means of 'dismantling the state structures of the empire'. Khakimov describes Russia as follows:

The peculiarity of Russia is that democratic laws have rarely been adopted there, and even when they have been adopted they have never been observed. Two points are important for understanding the political situation in Russia: (1) Russian society has traditionally been undemocratic, and (2) the existing constitution and laws have usually been ignored.³⁸

³⁶ Rafael S. Khakimov, *Sumerki imperii. K voprosu o natsii i gosudarstve*, (hereafter, *Sumerki imperii*), Kazan, Tatknizdat, 1993, p.19.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.6-7.

³⁸ Rafael S. Khakimov, 'Prospects of Federalism in Russia: A View from Tatarstan', *Security Dialogue*, vol.27, no 1, 1996, p.69.

Relying on these assertions, Khakimov claims that the post-Soviet process of federalisation in Russia could destroy Moscow's 'imperial control' over the Tatars and Tatarstan. In Khakimov's line of thinking, Moscow treats the Russians in Tatarstan as imperial subjects just like the Tatars in the Republic. Therefore, the Russians in Tatarstan, for Khakimov, have an interest in developing good relations with Tatarstan's government rather than with the federal government in Moscow. These claims are visible in Khakimov's following statement:

[n]either in its foreign, nor in its domestic policy does Russia act as a guarantor of the rights of the Russians and this is why the Russian people will have to look for support wherever they are, in the republics.³⁹

Another reason for the Russians in Tatarstan, according to Khakimov, to support Tatarstan's government is that Tatarstan's leadership simply conceived the full independence of Tatarstan from Moscow as an unrealistic project. The main reason of this, for the Republican leadership, is that Tatarstan was economically dependent on Russia.

In the literature on post-Soviet Tatar nationalism, Katherine E. Graney, Ravil Bukharaev and Jean-Robert Ravieaux have taken Khakimov's conception of civic Tatar nationalism for granted. Graney conceived Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism as being civic.⁴⁰ However, Shaimiev's form of nationalism cannot be considered fully civic since non-Tatar national identities in Tatarstan are not accommodated through inclusive democratic political institutions. Bukharaev was equally wrong in arguing that 'there is a democracy in Tatarstan, as all the opponents of the President are free to define him as they see fit'.⁴¹ However, the existence of alternative opinions about Shaimiev does not mean that Shaimiev tolerates independent political activity that could challenge his rule in Tatarstan. Similarly, Ravieaux argued that Tatarstan's leadership has adopted economic nationalism and used the Republican declaration of sovereignty to gain the control of

³⁹ Khakimov, *Sumerki imperii*, p.18.

⁴⁰ Katherine E. Graney, 'The Volga Tatars: Diasporas and the Politics of Federalism', in *Nations Abroad: Diaspora Politics and International Relations in the Former Soviet Union*, eds. Charles King and Neil J. Melvin, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999, p.157.

⁴¹ Bukharaev's emphasis. Ravil Bukharaev, *The Model of Tatarstan under President Mintimer Shaimiev*, London: Curzon, 1999, p.54.

Tatarstan's economic wealth.⁴² However, the so-called 'economic nationalism' of Tatarstan's leadership cannot be seen as being identical to a civic Tatar nationalism, since it is in the interests of a very small number of Tatars. In fact, Tatarstan's leadership has made a pragmatic use of Tatar nationalism, such as the requirement of knowing Tatar, in addition to Russian, for certain government posts.

In opposition to Khakimov's interpretation of Tatarstan's post-Soviet experience, Valerii Tishkov criticised the post-Soviet Tatar leadership's promotion of Tatar national identity. Tishkov also rejects Khakimov's claim that Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership promoted a civic conception of Tatar national identity. Tishkov says that,

How wide was the circle of 'we' for Raphael [*sic*] Khakimov at this time? Doubtless its content had changed since local intellectuals and politicians in this republic, after proclaiming sovereignty, started to implement the doctrine of building a civic, multi-ethnic Tatarstan nation including ethnic Russians and other groups living in this republic.⁴³

For Tishkov, ethnic nationalism in Russia is a result of the policies of non-Russian elites, who seek to gain access to resources and privileges. Tishkov identified the ethnic nationalist credentials of Tatarstan's leadership as follows:

The most striking example is the Republic of Tatarstan. Here the ruling elite employed Tatar ethnonationalism, radically expressed by ultra-nationalist organisations and local intellectuals, to establish a firm and indisputable political order based on titular representation.⁴⁴

Tishkov provides another evidence from one of his interviews with Rafael Khakimov. In this interview, Khakimov was quoted as saying that,

We had learned the technology of how to call up national forces, how to organise and to direct them. Now we control the nationals (*natsionaly*) because we had achieved a lot and have another agenda.⁴⁵

To remedy this problem of ethnic mobilisation by non-Russian republican leaders, Tishkov argues that a civic Russian nation (*rossiiskaia natsiia*) as a community of all

⁴² Jean-Robert Ravieaux, 'Tipy natsionalizma, obshchestvo i politika v Tatarstane', *Politicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.3, no.5-6, 1992, p.50.

⁴³ Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, (hereafter, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict*), London: Sage, 1997, p.45.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.242.

citizens of the Russian Federation regardless of their cultural and religious differences should be forged through the efforts of politicians and intellectuals. Thus, Tishkov recommends that,

states can abandon the use of the word *nation* as an academically and legally meaningless self-ascription. My position is that the state is just a state. Labelling it as a 'national' or not, is like giving it an adjective of colour (for example blue state, brown state).⁴⁶

Nevertheless, Tishkov's rhetoric of 'civic nationalism' favours Moscow as it downgrades the status of the Tatars and other non-Russian minorities from a nationality to an ethnic group. For Tishkov, the formation of a civic Russian nation (*rossiiskaia natsiia*) is hindered by the existence of national-territorial formations incorporated within Russia. Thus, Tishkov strongly objects to the continuing use of the Soviet-era expression 'multinational people' (*mnogonatsional'nyi narod*) in the post-Soviet Russian legislation, including the 1993 constitution of the Russian Federation. This terminology, according to Tishkov, emphasises 'the absence, in a legal sense, of the Russian nation (*rossiiskaia natsiia*) as a single subject of political self-determination and the source of state sovereignty'. He believes that the admission in the constitution that many nations exist among 'the people (*narod*) of the Russian Federation' could lead to recognition of these nations' right to self-determination.⁴⁷

Although Tishkov calls for the eradication of post-communist Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms through a non-ethnic process of federalisation, it should be noted that, as Anatol Lieven argues, Russian ethnic nationalism has always been weak compared to that of many other nations, since 'Russian political identification has always been with imperial or ideological states that, though Russian in origin, were far from being simply Russian'.⁴⁸ Therefore, Tishkov's attitudes towards Russia's non-Russian minorities, including the Tatars, reflect the legacy of Moscow's imperial control over non-Russians,

⁴⁵ Cited in *ibid.*, p.45.

⁴⁶ Tishkov's emphasis. Valerii A. Tishkov, 'Forget the "Nation": Post-Nationalist Understanding of Nationalism', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol.23, no.4, 2000, p.646.

⁴⁷ Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict*, p.ix.

⁴⁸ Anatol Lieven, 'Qu'est-ce qu'une nation? Scholarly Debate and the Realities of Eastern Europe', (hereafter, 'Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?'), *National Interest*, no.49, 1997, p.20.

which is, for Mark R. Beissinger, still influential in the post-imperial context.⁴⁹ In other words, Tishkov's views look like what Michael Billig calls 'banal nationalism'. According to Billig, 'banal nationalism' refers to the often-understated nationalism of the 'established nations'. This form of nationalism emerges when 'our' nationalism is not presented as nationalism, which is dangerously irrational, surplus and alien, but as patriotism, which is good and beneficial.⁵⁰

To sum up, this literature review illustrates that normative theories of nationalism based on the categorisation of post-Soviet nationalisms into either civic or ethnic nationalism are analytically and normatively problematic in the context of what happened in Tatarstan. Analytically, the narrow definition of ethnic nationalism leaves everything apart from ethnicity civic. For example, imperial ethnic nationalism might emerge as civic. Normatively, the description of a non-ethnic form of nationalism as 'civic' may promote cultural chauvinism of the dominant ethnic group, where democracy and civil society have not been consolidated.⁵¹ The confusion between ethnic and civic identities in Tatarstan and the Russian Federation partly stems from the fact that ethnic or civic nationalisms emerge only if either civil society or democratic state structures exist. However, as Richard Sakwa argues, the democratisation process in the post-Communist space has taken unique forms, as the political elites in these countries manipulated it to promote their self-interests.⁵² In fact, pragmatic politicians operating under the severest socio-economic and regional constraints on their behaviours, rather than civic or ethnic nationalists, rule Tatarstan and the Russian Federation. For these pragmatic politicians, civic nationalism potentially has a broader appeal since it does not exclude anyone within the society, but lacks the emotive edge of ethnic nationalism. In general, they make both types of claims depending on the circumstances.

⁴⁹ Mark R. Beissinger, 'State-Building in the Shadow of an Empire-State: The Soviet Legacy in Post-Soviet Politics' in *The End of Empire? The Transformation of the USSR in Comparative Perspective*, eds. Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1997, p.178.

⁵⁰ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, London: Sage, 1995, p.6.

⁵¹ Rogers Brubaker, 'Myths and Misconceptions in the Study of Nationalism', in *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*, ed. John Hall, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp.298-301.

⁵² Richard Sakwa, *Postcommunism*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999, pp.5-6.

The Main Argument

The thesis argues that Tatarstan's leadership succeeded in maintaining political power and gaining economic wealth through promoting neither the civic nationalism of participating citizens in Tatarstan nor the ethnic nationalism of the Tatar nation bound together by common culture and history, but *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* which demands national autonomy for the Tatars as the only formula for Tatarstan's leadership to secure regional stability against ethnic nationalisms of the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan and the adverse regional effects of the federal policies. The thesis considers the weaknesses of the Russian federal centre and Tatarstan's civil society as the main factors enabling Tatarstan's leadership to pursue a politics of survival through manipulating Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism.

I think, *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* can be defined as an elite-oriented, undemocratic and non-mobilisational form of post-communist nationalism that has been promoted by the former communist *nomenklatura* elites in order to justify the demand for national sovereignty for the members of a nation within a specific territory in terms of the need to protect the nation from the destabilising effects of any form of ethnic nationalism in that territory and external political pressures. In addition, I use *the 'Tatarstan model' of Russian federalism* in this thesis in order to denote an institutional arrangement between the federal centre in Moscow and the non-Russian Republics of the Russian Federation by which the former communist *nomenklatura* elites of these republics were granted privileges in return for their cooperation in keeping ethnic nationalist movements in their republics under control.

Relying on these definitions of *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* and *the 'Tatarstan model' of Russian federalism*, this thesis will focus on the nature of Tatarstan's leadership as well as its relations with Moscow and the people in Tatarstan as factors shaping Tatarstan's post-Soviet politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism.

Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership retains the Soviet-era characteristics of *nomenklatura*, which refers to the system of political appointments in the Soviet Union. As Richard Sakwa argues, the concept of *nomenklatura* took a new meaning

in the post-Soviet context as 'a way of identifying a broad social class' rather than a precise occupational category.⁵³ This social class consists of the former communist elites who share similar values and interests regardless of the differences in their post-Soviet occupations. In this sense, Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership share a *nomenklatura* view of nationalism, which cannot be labelled as a form of civic or ethnic nationalism. Emil Pain describes '*nomenklatura nationalism*' in the Russian context as

the ideology of the segment of the former Soviet political elite that is now re-entering the bodies of government and administration in the centre as well as in the regions or those who have been in power since 1991 but have stopped concealing their nationalist views and now proclaim them openly.⁵⁴

However, this form of *nomenklatura* nationalism represents only the reactionary political behaviour of former communist *nomenklatura* elites to the changing political conditions. Most members of the former Communist *nomenklatura* in various parts of the post-communist world, such as Central Asia, Belarus and many regions of the Russian Federation, succeeded in realising their political survival without adopting reactionary policies, as in the case of Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic. In Central Asia, Belarus and many regions of the Russian Federation, the non-reactionary forms of *nomenklatura* nationalist behaviour was developed by some post-Soviet leaders in the guise of confronting radicalism and ethnic nationalism their territories.

From this point of view, Tatarstan's leadership promotes a *pragmatic* form of *nomenklatura nationalism* in the sense that nationalist goals are pragmatically revised in line with the changing interests of Tatarstan's *nomenklatura* leadership and the changing political conditions inside and outside the Republic. They do not mobilise the masses behind their nationalist projects in order to oppose the process of reform *per se*. Instead, they seek to shape the direction of reform process in their own interest in return for cooperating pragmatically with the 'reformers' in demobilising ethnic nationalism, and keeping it under control.

⁵³ Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge, 1996, p.60.

⁵⁴ Emil A. Pain, 'Russkii vopros: Ot internatsionalizma k nomenklaturnomu natsionalizmu?', *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 27 January 1999, p.3.

Pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism has been advocated by Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership since it is better suited to their strategy of keeping Tatar ethnic nationalists at bay while issuing declarations in favour of democratic federalism and civic nationalism that are not backed up by a process of democratisation in the Republic. Although *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* prevents the instability of inter-ethnic relations in the Republic, it largely constrains the process of democratisation in Tatarstan. In fact, the promotion of either civic or ethnic Tatar nationalism is not in the interest of Tatarstan's leadership since the development of either form of Tatar nationalism would undermine their power. While civic Tatar nationalism requires the promotion of democratisation, ethnic Tatar nationalism demands a confrontational policy towards Moscow. Both forms of Tatar nationalism imply equality of Tatarstan's nomenklatura leadership with the rest of the population in the Republic or with their co-ethnic peoples and, therefore, the elimination of their group privileges in Tatarstan.

In fact, the analysis of Tatarstan's post-Soviet politics through the conceptual lenses of 'good' civic nationalism versus 'bad' ethnic nationalism could produce reductionist explanations. For example, although the political survival policies of Tatarstan's leadership increased Tatarstan's autonomy from Moscow and resulted in discrimination against the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan, they cannot be seen as evidence of Shaimiev's 'anti-Russian' Tatar ethnic nationalism, since they are basically unintended outcomes of Shaimiev's policies of political survival. Similarly, Shaimiev's public declarations in favour of multinationalism do not make him a 'civic' nationalist, since these declarations cannot necessarily reflect the 'real' intentions of Tatarstan's leadership. In fact, Shaimiev uses the discourse of multinationalism against the Tatar and the Russian 'extremists' (ethnic nationalists) in Tatarstan for the purpose of justifying his suppressive policies against the opposition to his 'centrist' policies. In both cases, the political survival policies of Tatarstan's leadership serve to limit the room for democratic change in the Republic. Tatarstan's post-Soviet developmental path also served to accommodate the interests of both the former imperial elites in Moscow and the regional elites in Tatarstan through informal channels. The emerging institutional framework, which is assumed to make Moscow's relationship with Tatarstan more 'democratic' through sharing some of central powers with the Republic, serves to camouflage what Tatarstan's leadership received in return for its contribution to the stability of the Russian Federation.

The tendency of Tatarstan's leadership to act in the spirit of *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* has been rooted in the evolution of the relations between Russia and the Tatar elites. Under the Russian Empire, Moscow and St. Petersburg co-opted a significant part of the Tatar elite. This increased the autonomy of the elites from the Tatar masses. Their autonomy from Moscow increased when the Tatar elites promoted the growth in Tatar national consciousness in the nineteenth century. During the Soviet period, there was a lack of interest in Tatar affairs mainly because of the difficulties in getting reliable information from the Soviet Union.⁵⁵ Although the Bolsheviks checked the rise of Tatar nationalism, the formation of the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (TASSR) in 1920 provided a durable institutional frame for the long-term consolidation of the Tatar nation. Tatar elites adopted national communism, which refers to a national route to the construction of communism, as it was the only way to ensure popular participation. Moscow controlled Tatar national communism through purges during the 1930s and through clientelistic co-optation of the TASSR's leadership during the 1970s. This historical background could partly explain why Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership has refrained from sponsoring exclusively ethnic or civic forms of Tatar nationalism, and instead has adopted *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism*.

Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership, unlike the federal leadership, have largely maintained its Soviet-era closely-knitted monolithic nature.⁵⁶ The monolithic composition of Tatarstan's leadership is crucial for ethnic nationalists, since its fragmentation could enable their ethnic nationalist movements to make progress.⁵⁷ However, Tatarstan's leadership has largely remained united in order to exploit the state from within on behalf of the nation without going over to the side of Tatar ethnic nationalists.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Gregory Gleason, 'The 'National Factor' and the Logic of Sovietology', in *The Post-Soviet Nations: Perspectives on the Demise of the USSR*, ed. Alexander J. Motyl, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, p.16.

⁵⁶ James Hughes, 'Sub-National Elites and Post-Communist Transformation in Russia: A Reply to Kryzhanovskaya & White', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.49, no.6, 1997, pp.1019-1020.

⁵⁷ Mark R. Beissinger, 'Elites and Ethnic Identities in Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics', in *The Post-Soviet Nations: Perspectives on the Demise of the USSR*, ed. Alexander J. Motyl, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, pp.157-160.

⁵⁸ Mary McAuley, *Russia's Politics of Uncertainty*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp.6-9.

The nomenklatura background of the Tatar elites plays an important role in their politics of nationalism. As William Thompson argues, post-Soviet institutions do not operate on a *tabula rasa*, but in a context where Soviet institutions and groups try to preserve their position while challenged by new social actors.⁵⁹ Alexander J. Motyl supports Thompson's argument by explaining the subversive impacts of surviving Soviet institutions as follows:

The Soviet legacies combined to create a particularly resilient political-economic amalgam of dilapidated economies, powerful managers, old-boy networks, and former Communist apparatchiks fused into closed networks of elites with an interest in maintaining a status quo that enabled them to live off society while enjoying the perquisites of power.⁶⁰

In fact, as Midkhat Farukshin's study of Tatarstan's leadership showed, most of the leaders of Tatarstan were high up in the local communist nomenklatura before 1991.⁶¹ Shaimiev had the key position of First Secretary of the regional Communist Party until 1990 and Chairperson of the Supreme Soviet of the TASSR in 1990-1991. The post-Soviet Tatar nomenklatura became dependent for their posts on elections and not on the approval of Moscow, following the collapse of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Thus, they started to play the ethnic card, presenting themselves as the defenders of the Tatar culture, while at the same time seeking to avoid antagonising the ethnic Russians, who often form an important part of their electorate. Shaimiev manipulated the inability of political movements to attract public support for his rule. Moreover, his ability to rein in nationalist fervour and keep the Republic stable has given him wide popular support. Shaimiev has also managed to neutralise much of the political opposition in Tatarstan. To this purpose, he has co-opted some of the Tatar ethnic nationalist opposition's most popular slogans -including sovereignty itself- and their leading figures, such as Shaimiev's adviser Rafael Khakimov. Although Tatarstan's leadership claims that it promotes civic Tatar nationalism in order to contain all forms of ethnic nationalism in the Republic, as Rogers Brubaker says, an ethnocratic political order could emerge as a result of presumably 'civic' or non-ethnic approach to interethnic relations since;

⁵⁹ William Thompson, 'Old Habits Die Hard: Fiscal Imperatives, State Regulation and the Role of Russia's Banks', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.49, no.7, 1997, p.1159-1160.

⁶⁰ Alexander J. Motyl, 'Soviet Legacies, Post-Soviet Transformations', *Freedom Review*, vol.28, no.1, 1997, p.50.

⁶¹ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Politicheskaya elita v Tatarstane: Vyzovy vremeni i trudnosti adaptatsii', *Politicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.5, no.6, 1994, pp.67-69.

a formally liberal and ethnically neutral definition of statehood and citizenship may, in an ethnically heterogeneous state in which the state-bearing majority and a minority or minorities understand themselves as belonging to distinct ethno-cultural nations, mask a substantively ethnocratic organisation of public life.⁶²

In this sense, the politics of nationalism in Tatarstan disguises struggles that are waged around the issues of political power and the reallocation of property rights.

In their relations with Moscow, Tatarstan's leadership sought to maximise the autonomy of Tatarstan as far as possible through a pragmatic politics of Tatar nationalism. As Peter J. S. Duncan argues, such regional autonomy demands indicate the desire of regional elites to ensure that the process of privatisation was implemented under their own control and for their own benefit.⁶³ The contradictions and ambiguities in the text of the treaty provided room for Tatarstan's leadership to make use of its own type of Tatar nationalism in its relations with Moscow. Consequently, Tatarstan's relations with Moscow between 1994 and 1999 have taken stronger confederal character than the treaty text would suggest.⁶⁴ It is the post-Soviet weakness of Moscow that made it easier for Tatarstan's leadership to enjoy such *de facto* autonomy. Thus, Tatarstan's leadership has used its *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* not only until the signing of the treaty but more significantly in its aftermath. In this respect, Sergei Kondrashov assumes that both the federal and Tatarstan authorities share an interest in denying the radical wing of the nationalists a pool of potential supporters.⁶⁵ I think, Kondrashov ignores the fact that unlike Moscow, Tatarstan's leadership has no interest in rooting out ethnic nationalism *per se* in Tatarstan, since it justifies Tatarstan's sovereignty over the local population and its autonomy from Moscow in terms of the need to protect the Tatar nation from the destabilising effects of any form of ethnic nationalism in Tatarstan. In other words, the elimination of ethnic nationalists in Tatarstan would make the main rationale of

⁶² Rogers Brubaker, 'Nationhood and the National Question in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Eurasia: An Institutionalist Account', *Theory and Society*, vol.23, no.1, 1994, p.69.

⁶³ Peter J. S. Duncan, 'Russia: Accommodating Ethnic Minorities', in *The Politics of Multinational States*, ed. D. N. MacIver, London: Macmillan, 1999, p.77.

⁶⁴ Nail Moukhariamov, 'Tatarstan Model: A Situational Dynamic', in *Beyond the Monolith: The Emergence of Regionalism in Post-Soviet Russia*, eds. Peter J. Stavrakis, Joan DeBardeleben and Larry Black, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p.230.

⁶⁵ Sergei Kondrashov, *Nationalism and the Drive for Sovereignty in Tatarstan, 1988-92: Origins and Development*, London: Macmillan, 2000, p.197.

Tatarstan's pragmatic *nomenklatura* leadership in justifying Tatarstan's autonomy redundant. Thus, in my review of Kondrashov's book, I argued that:

[t]he Tatar political establishment needs the survival of Tatar ethnic nationalism for the continuity of various privileges granted by Moscow. If Tatar ethnic nationalism was eradicated for good, then Moscow would not need to tolerate Tatarstan's exceptional autonomy in the Russian Federation.⁶⁶

Although Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership has not sought to eradicate ethnic nationalism for good, it ensured that its version of Tatar *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* gained the upper hand vis-à-vis the Russian and Tatar versions of ethnic nationalism in Tatarstan. This can be explained by Richard Sakwa's argument that in post-Soviet Russia '[t]he very structure of protest and other forms of collective action have been both delegitimized and marginalized'.⁶⁷ In particular, the civil society, where nationalist movements could develop, is very weak vis-à-vis the authorities in both Moscow and Tatarstan. A thorough study of Tatarstan's society and culture would reveal that there is not a strong basis for any ethnic-based nationalist mobilisation in Tatarstan. The non-antagonistic character of the self/other perceptions of the Tatars and the Russians, the high levels of religious tolerance, bilingualism, mixed marriages and urbanisation as well as the state-dependent economy and a weak civil society have both undermined the institutional bases of ethnic mobilisation among the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan, and increased their dependence on Tatarstan's leadership for their socio-economic survival.⁶⁸

The pragmatic approach of the post-Soviet Russian elites to the question of Russian federalism has also enabled Moscow to accommodate Tatarstan's pragmatic politics of Tatar nationalism. Thus, Moscow has maintained its territorial integrity in the post-Soviet period not because there was a fully-instituted democratic form of federalism, but because Moscow made pragmatic concessions to nepotistic regional leaders, such as Shaimiev, in the name of multiculturalism. This type of federalism slightly differs from

⁶⁶ Oktay F. Tanrisever, 'Review of Sergei Kondrashov's Nationalism and the Drive for Sovereignty in Tatarstan, 1988-92: Origins and Development', *Slavonic and East European Review*, vol.79, no.2, 2001 p.372.

⁶⁷ Richard Sakwa, 'State and Society in Post-Communist Russia', in *Institutions and Political Change in Russia*, ed., Neil Robinson, London: Macmillan, 2000, p.203.

⁶⁸ Damir M. Iskhakov, *Problemy stanovleniia i transformatsii tatarskoi natsii*, Kazan: Master Lain, 1997, pp.178-189.

the Western conceptions of democratic federation. Since democratic federations increase a nation's self-governance, the demands for national self-determination through complete independence are weak in these federations. However, the Russian Federation has problems in instituting even the fundamental qualities of federalism. For example, there is no clear legal definition of regional autonomy in the Russian Federation. Unlike the Russian Federation, however, Canada is an example of a democratic federalism that works, since Quebec with its national identity enjoys a wide range of regional autonomy. The governments of Spain and Belgium have also adopted significant constitutional moves toward federation as a means of resolving national conflicts.⁶⁹ This suggests that democratic federations could contain ethnic nationalism.

Note on the Method

The methodology that is used in this Ph.D. research is designed to identify the pragmatic uses of civic and ethnic symbols by Tatarstan's leadership, and the responses of the federal leadership in Moscow and the ethnic Russians and the Tatars in Tatarstan.

To this purpose, the thesis employs new institutionalism as a method of analysis. New institutionalism differs from classical institutionalist analysis in terms of its broader conceptualisation of institutions. According to Douglass North, a leading representative of new institutionalism, institutions can be defined as 'any form of constraint that human beings devise to shape human interaction'.⁷⁰ This definition includes both formal constraints – such as rules that human beings devise – and informal constraints – such as conventions and codes of behaviour. In the absence of formal institutions that constrain major actors and their strategies within a given polity, new institutionalism assumes that informal institutions like clientelism and corruption could become dominant in any society.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Alfred Stephan, 'Russian Federalism in Comparative Perspective', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.16, no.2, 2000, p.137.

⁷⁰ Douglass North, *Institutions, Institutional Changes and Economic Performance*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p.4.

⁷¹ For further information on the new institutionalism, see Ellen M. Immergut, 'The Theoretical Core of the New Institutionalism', *Politics & Society*, vol.26, no.1, 1998, pp.5-35.

New institutionalism is especially useful in identifying the impact of historical legacies on the working of political institutions, such as federalism. In the case of Tatarstan, it could enable us to identify the impact of the *nomenklatura* background of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership on its politics of nationalism. Besides, new institutionalism pays more attention to the relationship between formal and informal institutions. Thus, it could also enable us to identify the uses of formal institutions, such as federal structures, in order to accommodate the pragmatic *nomenklatura* nationalism of regional elites, which generally seek to secure the political survival of their informal networks of power and wealth at the regional level. In this sense, new institutionalism can be used to explain how the principle of 'arbitrary rule' emerges in Tatarstan, and in the federal relations between Moscow and Tatarstan when formal institutions, such as federation, serve to conceal the informal dominance of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership in the Republic. By combining the formal and informal factors together, it would be possible to identify the existence of unwritten rules in Russia's federal relations, which sometimes play more important role than the written rules in the conduct of centre-periphery relations. Last but not least, new institutionalism could enable us to explain why the political actors in Russia's centre-periphery relations opt for pragmatic and short-lived arrangements rather than long-term systemic solutions in a political environment that has been characterised by increasing uncertainty in the post-Soviet era.

This new institutionalist methodology is used to explore the Tatarstan case from a historical and comparative perspective that could enable us to refrain from making universal statements concerning the politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism. In fact, Tatar nationalism has taken different forms in different historical periods (Tsarist, Soviet and post-Soviet). It is also very essential to take local factors and historical legacies into account in exploring different forms of nationalism. Anatol Lieven suggests that such an approach could contribute to the attempts at overcoming the misunderstandings in the studies of nationalism. As Lieven says,

History and nationalism too are a kind of jungle, but are also in themselves neutral, and can be turned to the account of peace, order and civilisation. But in order to travel safely in them you need a proper local map, with a small scale and detailed contours.⁷²

The current research was carried out through an analysis of relevant documents, including the treaties and agreements between Moscow and Tatarstan. The views of ethnic Russians and Tatars concerning their national identities were also traced through election, referendum and public opinion survey results. Furthermore, media coverage of the developments were explored through examining several newspapers, magazines and bulletins such as the Current Digest of Post-Soviet Press (CDPSP), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and the Jamestown Foundation. Regional developments were studied through the Russian Regional Report, which is published by the East-West Institute (this report was initially published by the Open Media Research Institute in Prague). This research is based upon sources in English, Russian and Tatar.

During this research, two visits were made to the Russian Federation. The first visit was in April-June 1996, and the second was in April-July 1998. I visited Moscow and Tatarstan on both occasions. This provided me with an opportunity to observe the changes that occurred between these visits at first hand. In Moscow, I studied at the Moscow State University Library and the Russian State Library (the Lenin Library). I also had the opportunity to visit the Russian Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology. I studied at the National Library of Tatarstan and Kazan State University Library. Both in Moscow and Tatarstan, I had interviews with several participants and specialists, including Prof. Leokadia Drobizheva, Chairperson of the Political Anthropology Department at the Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Dr. Rafael Khakimov, Chief Advisor to the President of Tatarstan, Prof. Indus Tagirov, Chairperson of the World Congress of Tatars (Both Khakimov and Tagirov represented the Tatarstan government during the negotiations with Moscow), Prof. Midkhat Farukshin, a well-known specialist on Russian federalism and Chairperson of the Department of Political Science at the Kazan State University, and Rafael Mukhammetdinov, the founder of the Tatar National Independence Party – *Ittifak* (the full list of my interviews with participants and specialists is available in the Bibliography). During my research, I also had interviews with some ordinary Tatars and Russians in Tatarstan. I made use of my fieldwork notes on these interviews briefly in

⁷² Lieven, 'Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?', p.22.

Chapter Four. This method is adopted from Studs Terkel's work *Race: How Blacks and Whites Think and Feel about the American Obsession* (1992).⁷³

The Outline of the Thesis

This study is organised into five main chapters other than the introduction and conclusion. The introduction sets out the approach. In what follows, the first main chapter provides the historical background of the Russian-Tatar relations. Chapter one begins by exploring the Tatar position under Russian imperial rule and the co-optation of parts of the noble Tatar elite into the Russian nobility. The main part of the chapter will provide a targeted history of Tataria under the Soviet rule, with a focus on the relations between the Tatar communist leadership in Kazan and the Russian and Soviet centres in St. Petersburg and Moscow. For this purpose, the formative years of the TASSR will be analysed to identify in what fields the TASSR possessed real autonomy. Afterwards the chapter will examine two attempts of the Tatar communist leadership to increase its autonomy on the eves of the 1936 and 1977 constitutions. In examining each attempt at increasing the Autonomous Republic status of Tataria to Union Republic status, this chapter will analyse Moscow's responses as well. Stalin's response was to purge the Tatar elites during the 1930s. Brezhnev, on the other hand, responded with accommodative measures, such as huge investments in Tataria and granting the Tatar elites security of tenure during the 1960s and 1970s. The following section will examine the impact of perestroika on Tatar elites with a special focus on the sovereignty declarations of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and the TASSR. Finally, the post-August Coup politics in Tataria and Checheno-Ingushetiia will be contrasted in the remaining section of this chapter.

The second chapter investigates the pragmatic uses of nationalism by Tatarstan's leadership in the formation and working of Shaimiev's regime in Tatarstan. The chapter begins with an analysis of the role of nationalism for the political survival of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership. Afterwards, Shaimiev's discourse of nationalism will be explored

⁷³ Studs Terkel, *Race: How Blacks and Whites Think and Feel about the American Obsession*, New York: The New Press, 1992.

in order to identify whether it is a civic, ethnic or pragmatic form of nationalism. Next, Tatarstan's policies of nation-building will be analysed by looking at Tatarstan's policies in the fields of language, education, culture and religion. This will be followed by the analysis of the impact of nation-building policies in employment opportunities and economic policy. Furthermore, the chapter will examine the absence of a Russian backlash by looking at both patronage networks and electoral engineering in Tatarstan. In the final section, Tatarstan's politics of nationalism will be compared to the politics of nationalism in the Bashkortostan and Chuvashiia republics of the Russian Federation and in Kazakhstan.

The third chapter focuses on the pragmatic uses of Tatar nationalism by Tatarstan's leadership in managing Tatarstan's relations with Moscow. The chapter begins by mapping out the negotiating positions of Moscow and Tatarstan's leadership concerning the status of Tatarstan in the post-Soviet era. Afterwards, we will explore how the Treaty with Moscow was finally negotiated. Next, the chapter will analyse what this Treaty says, and the reactions of the Russians and the Tatars to the Treaty. In the following section, Tatarstan's Treaty will be compared to the successes and failures of the non-Russian republics of Bashkortostan and Sakha, and the Russian Sverdlovsk region in their own power-sharing treaties with Moscow. Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism in the post-Treaty period will be explored by looking at Tatarstan's politics of electoral support for the El'tsin regime, Tatar diaspora and foreign economic relations. Furthermore, the worsening of relations between Moscow and Tatarstan between 1997 and 1998 will be explored by discussing Moscow's economic policies of controlling Tatarstan and Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism. In the final section, the impact of Russia's 1998 financial crisis on Tatarstan will be explored in terms of Tatarstan's capacity to play a greater role in shaping the future of the Russian Federation both in economic and political spheres.

The fourth chapter seeks to explore the nature of historical experience, society and culture in Tatarstan. Chapter Four starts by examining the historical experience of the Tatars and the Russians under Russian Imperial and Soviet rule. Afterwards, we will explore the polarisation of the Russian 'democrats' against Tatar 'ethnic nationalists' in late Soviet Tataria. Next, the weakness of ethnic nationalist movements in post-Soviet Tatarstan will

be examined. Furthermore, the chapter will compare the Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms in Tatarstan with other nationalist movements in the post-Soviet world. In the remaining part of the chapter, we will analyse the sources of the weak support for Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms by focusing on the self/other perceptions of the Tatars and the Russians, in addition to religion, language use, mixed marriages, urbanisation, economy and civil society in Tatarstan.

The fifth chapter explores how Tatarstan fits into developments in the Russian Federation. Chapter Five starts with an analysis of the so-called 'Tatarstan model' and its impact on the development of asymmetrical federalism in Russia. Afterwards, we will discuss why Russia is not disintegrating. Next, the Russian Federation will be compared with the following democratic federations: the United States, Canada, Germany, Spain and Belgium. In the following section, we will discuss the stability of intergovernmental relations between Moscow and Tatarstan by examining the diverging views of Moscow and Kazan on federal reforms in terms of their centripetal and centrifugal tendencies. In the final section, the stability of interethnic relations between Russians and Tatars will be analysed by focusing on the orientations of Russian and Tatar nationalisms.

The thesis concludes by bringing together all chapter findings concerning the relations of Tatarstan's leadership with Moscow and the local population of Tatarstan into a coherent perspective on the politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism.

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Map 1. Tatarstan

Source: The Territories of the Russian Federation, 1st ed., London: Europa, 1999, p.98.

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1. Moscow and the Tatar Elites: A Historical Analysis

This opening chapter seeks to explain the complex historical background of the relationship between Moscow and the Tatar elites through exploring Moscow's strategies of controlling Tataria and the tactics of the Tatar elites in increasing their autonomy. In fact, the orientation of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership toward the Republican population and Moscow cannot be explained adequately without exploring the historical formation of the Tatar elites in the Tsarist and Soviet periods. Yet, there are a very limited number of sources on the history of relations between Moscow and the Tatar elites. Although the reliability of Soviet sources is questionable because of the totalitarian control of scientific institutions under the Soviet rule, the works of Tatar émigrés on Tataria are more valuable. Azade-Ayşe Rorlich's *Volga Tatars* (1986), which is very helpful in understanding the pre-Soviet era, is weak in identifying political relations between Moscow and Kazan, since it focuses mainly on the cultural side of the Tatar experience under the Soviet rule.¹ Tamurbek Devletshin's *Sovetskii Tatarstan* (1974) is useful to understand the political dimension of the Soviet rule in the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (TASSR), but this work covers the period up to 1974.² Bringing together the original pieces published in various sources, this chapter attempts to provide a complete history of the relations between Moscow and the Tatar elites during the Tsarist and the Soviet periods.

The chapter hopes to demonstrate that the indirect nature of Russian and Soviet imperial rule over the Tatars has established the institutional power base of the Tatar elites who shifted their allegiances pragmatically from Moscow to the Tatar people and vice versa both in the Tsarist and the Soviet periods. When there was a strong government in Moscow, the Tatar elites adopted subservient policies. However, when Moscow had a weak or reformist government that was in need of support from the regions, the Tatar elites sought to increase their autonomy by calling for greater privileges and political status. In general, the Tatar elites had relied on the Soviet institutional framework in order

¹ In this thesis, Tataria and the TASSR will be used interchangeably in the Soviet context. Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars: A Profile in National Resilience*, (hereafter, *The Volga Tatars*), Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1986.

to increase their autonomy from the Russian centre in Moscow and the local population in the TASSR.

Initially a brief background will be given for explaining the Tatar position under Russian imperial rule and the co-optation of parts of noble Tatar elite into the Russian nobility. The main part of the chapter will provide a targeted history of Tataria under Soviet rule, with a focus on the relations between the Tatar communist leadership in Kazan and the Russian and Soviet centres in Moscow. For this purpose, the formative years of the TASSR will be analysed to identify in what fields the Republic possessed real autonomy. Afterwards, the chapter will examine two attempts of the Tatar communist leadership to increase its autonomy on the eves of the 1936 and 1977 constitutions. In examining each attempt at increasing the Autonomous Republic status of the TASSR to Union Republic status, this chapter will analyse Moscow's responses as well. Unlike Stalin, who purged the Tatar elites during the 1930s, Brezhnev responded with accommodative measures, such as huge investments in the TASSR and granting the Tatar elites security of tenure during the 1960s and 1970s. The following section will examine the impact of perestroika on Tatar elites with a special focus on the TASSR and RSFSR declarations on state sovereignty. Finally, the post-August Coup politics in Tataria and Checheno-Ingushetiia will be contrasted in the remaining section of this chapter.

The Origins of Russo-Tatar Relations

The history of Russo-Tatar relations goes back to the formation of the two earliest known states in Central Eurasia in the ninth century: the Bulgar state and the Kievan Rus. What is now Tatarstan territory was home to a variety of both nomadic and settled peoples, who established the Bulgar State. When the nomadic tribes of the Huns, the Avars and the Pechenegs started to migrate to the Volga region in the fourth century, this region had already been inhabited by the Finno-Ugric tribes. The present-day Volga Tatars just like the Bashkirs and Chuvash descend from an ethnic mixture of these peoples, who speak the dialects of the Kypchak Turkic language. According to the travel notes of Ibn Fadlan, an envoy of Abbasid Caliph Jafar-al-Muktadir, Islam was introduced to these peoples in

² Tamurbek Devletshin, *Sovetskii Tatarstan*, London: Our World Publishers, 1974.

922. Following their conversion to Islam, the people of this region replaced the Old Turkic Script with the Arabic Alphabet.³

The Bulgar State's relations with the Russians gained significance when the Kievan Russian Prince Sviatoslav defeated the Khazars, the vassal of the Bulgar State. The Bulgars improved their relations with the Russians through granting trade privileges to the Russian merchants in 984. Although the Russian principalities and the Bulgars clashed occasionally, the imminent Mongol danger brought their hostilities to an end. Nevertheless, Chingis Khan's grandson, Batu, overcame the resistance of the Bulgars and the Slavs in the mid-thirteenth century. After conquering the Bulgar lands in 1236, Batu's armies swept through Russia and in the winter of 1240 captured Kiev, the seat of Grand Prince Mikhail of Chernigov. When the Eastern Slavs became subjects of the Golden Horde they were enslaved and sold in the slave markets of Crimea. The Russians under Dmitrii Donskoi gained their first victory against the Mongols led by Mamai at the Battle of Kulikovo in 1380. However, to gain their total independence from the Mongol rule, the Russians had to wait until 1480.⁴

The Tatar elites originated from the ruling elites of three Tatar states: the Bulgar state, the Golden Horde and the Kazan Khanate. Although the Bulgar state had its own social classes, such as ruling elites, landed nobility and merchants, the Golden Horde had a more sophisticated social stratification system. In the Golden Horde, the highest institution was the *kurultai* (council). The landed aristocracy was composed of *Tarkans* and *soiurghals*, who possessed a right to have peasants as serfs. Free peasantry had to pay taxes of *kalan* (the land tax paid in kind) and *urtak* (the land rent paid in service). Khan Uzbek's decision to adopt Islam as the official religion of empire and to make Turkic the official language intensified the Islamic and Turkic culture in the region. Yet, marriages between the Russian and the Golden Horde rulers were quite common in this period. For example, Khan Uzbek's sister became the wife of Prince Iurii of Muscovy in 1317.⁵

³ Shirin Akiner, *Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union*, London: Kegan Paul 1983, pp.55-84.

⁴ Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, pp.17-23.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.21-22.

The Tatar elites that were co-opted by the Russian Empire came into existence under the Kazan Khanate, which was established by Ulu Mukhammed in 1437.⁶ According to the elite system of the Kazan Khanate, the Khan had an absolute power. However, the Khan's unlimited power was counter-balanced by the power of nobility. The highest organ of the Tatar nobility was the Royal Council (*karachi*). The Assembly of the Land, which was subordinate to the Royal Council, was composed of the representatives of the landed aristocracy, the military, and the ecclesiastical establishments. The princes of the Tatars (*mirzas*), Chuvash and Cheremis were the most prominent members of the landed aristocracy. The most prestigious members of the military establishment were the *ulans*. The religious authority was represented by the *Seyit*, (cleric who belongs to house of the prophet) followed by *sheikhs* (senior Islamic scholars). The free urban population of merchants and artisans, free peasants, serfs and slaves formed the rest of the population.⁷ For Ravil Bukharaev, a well-known expert of Tatar history, the main weakness of the Kazan Khanate's elite system lay in its disproportionate reliance on military and religious establishments. The militarist ideology of Islamic expansionism prevented the Kazan Khanate from developing a productive economic system. The Russian principalities, however, valued trade and artisanship rather than the religious dogma. In fact, the Kazan Khanate's collapse coincided with the decline of its parallel medieval institutions throughout Europe in the mid-sixteenth century.⁸

Moscow used the tactics of divide and rule to conquer the Kazan Khanate. The Tatar princes sought refuge in Moscow in the aftermath of dynastic clashes and domestic turmoil. In return, the Grand Princes of the Muscovite State exploited these situations to interfere in the domestic crises of the Kazan Khanate on behalf of their protégés. When Mahmud took over the throne of Kazan, his two brothers Iakub and Kasim went to Moscow and entered the service of Vasili II, who endowed Kasim with the small Tatar and Finno-Ugric populated town of Meshchera on the Oka River in 1439. The Kasimov Khanate was a client of Moscow and served to accommodate pro-Russian Tatar nobility who had feuds with their rivals in Kazan. When the Moscow-backed Muhammed Emin

⁶ When Kazan became the new political and economic centre in the Volga region, it was also called *Bulgar-al-jadid* (New Bulgar). Mikhail Khudiakov, *Ocherki po istorii Kazanskogo Khanstva*, Moscow: Insan, 1991, pp.17-48.

⁷ Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, pp.28-30.

⁸ My interview with Ravil Bukharaev, the Russian Service of BBC, Madison, WI, USA, 29 September 2000.

came to power in 1479, Moscow became able to interfere freely in the domestic affairs of Kazan. After the death of Muhammed Emin in 1518, the Crimean Khanate joined Moscow in disputing the succession of Kazan's rulers openly. From 1547 onwards, Ivan IV pursued an overtly hostile policy toward Kazan that culminated in putting an end to the Kazan Khanate's 107 years existence on 15 October 1552.⁹

Following the capture of Kazan, Russia became an empire. The relationship between Moscow and its Tatar subjects conforms to Ariel Cohen's characterisation of an imperial relationship. In Cohen's words,

Empire can be understood to be an age-old form of government between the subjects and the objects of political power, involving two or more national entities and territorial units in an unequal political relationship.¹⁰

Since Moscow's imperial control required the collaboration of some Tatars, even when policies were largely formulated by metropolitan elites, Moscow had to co-opt parts of noble Tatar elite into the Russian nobility. Thus, Moscow gave its priority to the recruitment of 'mediating elites' drawn from the Tatar people. It was the changing bargains of collaboration or mediation that had defined the actual working of imperial rule, and the political roles of the Tatar elites up until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

In general, Moscow's policy of co-opting the Tatar nobility had largely been successful. In fact, many families of Russian nobility, including many boyars and counts, had Tatar origins. Apart from the Godunov family, the following Russian noble families had Tatar surnames: Aksakov, Churikov, Derzhavin, Iussupov, Karamzin, Kugushev, Meshcherskii, Saburov, Shakhovskoi and Tolbuzin.¹¹ Since the Russian imperial policy of co-opting the Tatar nobles required some degree of identity change within local Tatar society, Kazan's Archbishop Gurii promoted the policy of converting the Muslim Tatars to Christianity in 1555. The Tatars were gradually converted to Christianity creating *starokreshchenye*. An edict of 1592 proclaimed that all mosques in Kazan were closed, and no more mosques were allowed to be built without Moscow's permission. Later, the

⁹ Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, pp.24-29.

¹⁰ Ariel Cohen, *Russian Imperialism: Development and Crisis*, (hereafter, *Russian Imperialism*), Westport, CT: Preager, 1996, p.1.

Tatars took part in the revolt of Stephan Razin in 1669-1670. This led to the exodus of the Tatars to Central Asia. The decree of 1681 denied many Moslem Tatar nobles the right to own serfs, and facilitated the confiscation of their lands. Unlike Russian peasants, a half of whom were serfs, the Tatar peasants were largely free.¹²

Although the missionary activity ceased during the 'Time of Troubles', Peter the Great pursued a policy of backing up the use of force with economic reprisals. He established the Kazan Province in 1708. Five years later, he ordered that the Muslims of Kazan should be given no more than six months to convert to Christianity if they wished to retain their holdings. A considerable number of Muslim Tatars submitted to this pressure. The laws of 1720 and 1721 provided further advantages for those who converted to Christianity, including exemption from military service and exemption from tax for three years. Consequently, it was estimated that some 40,000 Tatars had been baptised by 1725.¹³ Empress Anna Ivanovna continued to pursue Peter the Great's policies. She established a department for the affairs of Newly Baptised Peoples (*Kontora novokreshchenskikh del*) in 1740. Two years later, 418 of 536 mosques in Kazan province had been destroyed. In addition, the Tatars were prohibited from living in Kazan and its environs. As these repressive measures deprived some of the Tatar nobility of their lands, the Tatar nobility had to become traders.¹⁴ Nevertheless, this policy became counterproductive since it intensified the reactions of the Tatar peasants and united them with the Tatar nobility.¹⁵

In order to assert Moscow's control over the periphery, where the Pugachev rebellion took place, Catherine II divided Russia into provinces (*guberniia*) and districts (*uezdy*).¹⁶ Kazan became one of the important provinces of the empire, when she organised the territories around Kazan into *Kazanskaia guberniia*. For Catherine II, Russia's eastern expansionism into Central Asia could succeed only if the persecution of the Muslims

¹¹ Nikolai Baskakov, *Russkie familii tiurkского proiskhozhdeniia*, Moscow: Nauka, 1979, pp.5-46.

¹² These converts are called *kreshchen*, meaning those who became Christian. Il'dus Zagidullin, 'Prichiny otpadeniia starokreshchenykh tatar Srednego Povolzh'ia v musul'manstvo v XIX v.', *Panorama-Forum*, no.11, 1997, pp.36-39.

¹³ Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, pp.38-40.

¹⁴ Gaiaz Iskhaki, *Idel'-Ural*, Chally: Kalkan, 1992, p.25.

¹⁵ Iurii I. Semenov, *Natsional'naia politika v imperatorskoi Rossii*, Moscow: Staryi sad, 1997, pp.65-71.

¹⁶ S. Frederick Starr, *Decentralisation and Self Government in Russia, 1830-1870*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1972, pp.3-50.



stopped. She believed that the Tatars' demands for recognition of their religion, removal of restrictions on trade activity, and the restitution of the rights of Tatar nobility could have positive results as they could facilitate Russian trade with the Central Asian peoples. Apart from supporting the Tatar merchants, she sought to promote a loyal Islamic religious leadership. Initially she rescinded the law on building mosques in 1766. In place of the traditional Tatar clergy (*Mullahs* and *Abyzes*), Catherine instituted the Muslim Spiritual Board, which was headed by a pro-Moscow cleric, Mukhamedian Khuseinoglu, in 1789. These policies were fruitful as Russia succeeded not only in expanding the empire eastwards, but also in capturing the Crimean Khanate, last successor of the Golden Horde in the late eighteenth century.¹⁷

Moscow restarted its missionary campaign when eleven thousand Baptised Tatars converted back to Islam in Kazan *guberniia* in 1866. To stop the conversions back to Islam among the Baptised Tatars, Nikolai Il'minskii developed a system of Russian schools with local languages of instruction for the natives of the Volga-Ural region. This system was 'national in form, Orthodox in content'.¹⁸ Il'minskii's system, which was officially adopted by the Russian Education Ministry on 26 March 1870, was started to be used in the newly-created Russo-Tatar schools in addition to the separate schools designed for the baptised and Muslim Tatars. Tatar schools were allowed to be opened if they included Russian in their curriculum. Tatars with good command of language were given posts in local government offices.¹⁹ When Il'minskii died in 1891, there were 130 schools that followed his model. The Il'minskii system was criticised both by the Tatars out of fear of assimilation and by the Russian nationalists for its promotion of non-Russian culture. Il'minskii responded to these critics as follows:

This is the dilemma: If from fear of separate nationalities, we do not allow the non-Russians to use their language in schools and in churches, on a sufficient scale to ensure a solid, complete, convinced adaptation of the Christian faith, then all non-Russians will be fused into a single race by language and by faith – the Tatar and Mohammedan. But if we allow the non-Russian languages, then, even if their individual nationalities are thus maintained these will be

¹⁷ The Muslim Spiritual Board was located in Orenburg, and later moved to Ufa. Andreas Kappeler, 'Czarist Policy Toward Muslims of the Russian Empire', in *Muslim Communities Re-emerge: Historical Perspectives on Nationality, Politics, and Opposition in the Former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia*, ed. Edward Allworth, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994, p.146.

¹⁸ Il'minskii's view of education in native languages could be seen as a historical antecedent of the Soviet policy of *korenizatsiia*, meaning seeking roots among native peoples.

¹⁹ Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, pp.45-46.

diverse, small, ill-disposed to the Tatars, and united with the Russian people by the unity of their faith. Choose! But I believe that such diverse nationalities cannot have any solid existence, and in the end the very historical movement of life will cause them to unite with the Russian people.²⁰

Il'minskii's approach for recruiting the Tatar elites had two dimensions. On the one hand, this approach was useful in exporting Russian cultural values to the Tatars, thereby Russifying them. On the other hand, it contributed to the modernisation of the Tatar culture. To the surprise of the rulers in Moscow, however, the growth of Tatar national awareness was an unintended consequence of the modernisation of the Tatar culture.

Jadidism and the Growth of Tatar National Awareness

The growth of Tatar national identity despite the years of Russian imperial rule over the Tatars is one of the remarkable developments in the nineteenth century. This marked the inability of Moscow to co-opt the Tatar elites into its centralised rule though its *Kazanskaia guberniia*, and the rejection of Moscow's assimilation policy by the Tatar masses. In fact, it was the weakness of the Russian imperial centre that allowed the Tatar elites to promote the growth of Tatar national identity. The Tatar elites and masses started to develop their own national consciousness through cultural institutions. Karl Fuks observed the persistence of the Tatar national identity under Russian rule as follows:

This nation, having been conquered for more than two centuries and scattered nowadays among the Russians, preserved its traditions, morals and popular pride in such a surprising way, as if it had lived separately.²¹

In fact, Tatar national awareness took shape after the Tatars, who were influenced by Western culture in Moscow, St Petersburg and Paris, initiated a process of religious reform at the beginning of the nineteenth century.²² The supporters of religious reform in Islam, who were called reformists (*jadidists*), condemned religious conservatism and blamed the traditional religious leadership (*ulema*) and the co-opted Tatar nobility

²⁰ Quoted in Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire: 1801-1917*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967, p.502.

²¹ Karl Fuks, *Kazanskie Tatary v statisticheskoi i etnograficheskoi otnosheniakh*, Kazan, 1844, p.34.

²² Edward J. Lazzerini, 'Beyond Renewal: The Jadid Response to Pressure for Change in the Modern Age', in *Muslims in Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change*, ed. Jo-Ann Gross, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992, pp.161-165.

(*mirzas*) for the problems of the Tatar community.²³ Moreover, they considered the religiously based curriculum of the Tatar educational system to be the main cause of the backwardness. The Tatar reformers sought to establish secular schools, where modern sciences were taught. By developing an educational system for all Tatars, Muslim or Christian, the Tatar elites contributed to the creation of a Tatar 'high culture', forming the cultural basis for the emergence of modern Tatar national identity.²⁴

The groundwork for creating a secular Tatar national culture started with the publications of Sagit Halfin's *Azbuka tatarskogo iazyka* (Alphabet of Tatar Language) in 1774 and *Tatarskii slovar* (Tatar dictionary) in 1775. Moreover, the first Tatar printing office, *Aziatskaia tipographiia*, was established in 1802. Abu Nasr al-Kursavi (1824-1904) denounced the scholastic theology of Islam, and opened a secular school, where he stressed the use of Tatar vernacular in literary language. Qayum Nasiri (1825-1902) systematised the grammar of Tatar language. Husein Faizkhanov (1821-1866) called for the reorganisation of the Islamic seminaries to introduce into their programs secular subjects modelled on those of the Russian schools. Shigabetdin Marjani (1818-1889) wrote a secular account of Tatar history, where he used Tatar as independent from the term Muslim, and urged the Muslims in Kazan not to be ashamed to call themselves Tatar.²⁵ All of these reformist thinkers pointed out that a secular reform in Islam was necessary for the survival of Tatar culture in the modern age.

The growth in Tatar national consciousness gave its results through the increase in cultural productions in Tatar language. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Kazan became the centre of publishing for the Turkic peoples with 3,000,000 copies of 1,000 titles printed annually. Musa Akyigitzade who wrote the first Tatar novel *Husameddin Mullah*, argued that Tatar nationalism could develop through the westernisation of Tatar culture. The leading magazines in the Tatar language (*Vakit*, *Shura* and *Ang*) made Tatar nationalism more popular.²⁶ Meanwhile, Ismail Gaspirinskii, a Crimean Tatar, advocated

²³ The traditional religious leadership refers here to the pro-Moscow heads of the Muslim Spiritual Board in Ufa.

²⁴ The traditional Tatar education system was composed of primary schools (*mektebs*), where students learned some basic religious knowledge, and seminaries (*medreses*) where senior students studied Islamic sciences. Iskander Giliazov, 'Evoliutsiia sotsial'noi struktury tatarskogo obshchestva i islam (vtoraia pol. XVI-XVIII vv.)', *Panorama-Forum*, no.11, 1997, p.20.

²⁵ Rafael F. Mukhammetdinov, 'Put' ot ummy k natsii', *Panorama-Forum*, no.8, 1997, pp.156-161.

²⁶ Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, pp.70-72.

the ideology of pan-Turkism, which called for greater unity among Russia's Turkic nationalities including the Volga Tatars, the Crimean Tatars, the Azeris, the Kazakhs and the Uzbeks. Gaspirinskii's widely read newspaper, *Tercuman* (the Translator), propagated this ideology through the slogan of 'unity in language, work and spirit'. The attempts to forge a common language and identity for this imagined pan-Turkic nation, not surprisingly, failed because of its problems in differentiating itself from pan-Islamism.²⁷

The politicisation of Tatar nationalism started after the reforms of 1905. In his famous manifesto on 17 October 1905, Tsar Nicholas II proclaimed all Russian and non-Russian citizens equal, and introduced several political reforms, including the holding of elections to Russia's parliament (*Duma*). After a month of this declaration, Kamil Mutii published the first Tatar newspaper, *Fiker* (Idea), followed by *Al-Asr al-Jadid* (The Century of Renewal), a literary journal, and *Uqlar* (Arrows), a satirical journal. Abdullah Tukai (1886-1913), the national poet of the Tatars, worked actively for these publications.²⁸ Despite their cultural activism, this generation of Tatar reformers, such as Musa Bigi and Rizaeddin Fahreddin, were unable to form a Tatar socio-political movement.

The political ambitions of the *Jadidists* found expression during the four Muslim congresses. The first of these congresses was held in a boat, *Gustav Struve*, in Oka River on 15 August 1905. The Congress declared the goals of the Muslims as follows:

Unification of Russian Muslims for the purpose of carrying out political, economic, and social reforms
 Establishment of a democratic regime in which elected representatives of the people belonging to all nationalities would share in the legislative and executive power.
 Legal equality of Muslims and Russians
 Freedom to develop Muslim schools, press, book publishing, and cultural life as a whole.²⁹

Although the Muslim deputies generally acted as a united faction in the Duma, their numbers declined from twenty-five in the First State Duma to seven at the Fourth State Duma, since the Russian nationalists succeeded in changing the election system to their

²⁷ Sergei A. Zenkovsky, *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960, p.274.

²⁸ Tukai's one of the most famous poems 'Tugan tel' is available in Chapter Four.

²⁹ Musa Bigi, *Islahat Esaslari*, Petrograd, n.a., 1917, pp.175-177.

own benefit. Between 1907 and 1917 the Tatar cultural elites were unable to form a political organisation. With the exception of a handful of émigrés residing in the Ottoman Empire and Germany, no Tatar leader included political independence in their national programme. Even Yusuf Akchura, the most radical nationalist among them, oscillated in his demands between the achievement of national independence and equal treatment for the Tatars through granting cultural autonomy. Demands for cultural autonomy meant the right to maintain the Tatar cultural institutions wherever Tatars were living.³⁰

The Formation of the TASSR

The Tatar elites were unprepared politically to take advantage of the collapse of the Tsarist Empire in 1917, since they were internally divided into the nationalist and the socialist factions. These factions took shape during the Russia-wide Congress of Muslims in May 1917. The nationalists were called Turkists (*Turkculer*) because Sadri Maksudi Arsal's nationalist party, *Ittifaq-al-Muslimin* (Alliance of Muslims), demanded cultural autonomy for the Tatars and the unity of the Turkic groups. The socialist delegates were called territorialists (*Tufrakchylar*) since Mulla Nur Vakhidov's socialist faction viewed territorial federalism rather than cultural autonomy as in the best interest of the Tatars.³¹ These divisions prevented the Tatars from taking advantage of the fact that the immense Tsarist army disintegrated into total anarchy, while the Tatars, just like other nationalities, had their own armed forces.

In the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, the Tatar nationalists were very active, and formed many political organisations in several cities. In May 1917, Ahmed Tsalikov established the National Council (*Milli Shura*) in Petrograd. Two months later, the Military Council (*Harbi Shura*) was formed in Kazan with the participation of 50,000 soldiers. Sadri Maksudi Arsal founded a National Directorate (*Milli Idare*) in Ufa in the same month. Finally, the Tatar and some Bashkir nationalists from the present-day Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and part of the Orenburg region formed the National Assembly (*Milli Mejlis*), which declared the formation of the Idel-Ural State

³⁰ Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Co-operation*, London: Hurst, 1995, pp.7-21.

³¹ Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, p.132.

on these territories on 29 November 1917.³² Nevertheless, these organisations had a very weak popular support. So, all the Tatar nationalist organisations collapsed without offering any resistance when the local Bolsheviks marched in. On 27 February 1918, the Soviet of Kazan arrested the leaders of the *Harbi Shura*, while the Sheik of the Vaisi Sufi order sided with the Bolsheviks. The Communists managed to close all units of Tatar national organisations by 12 April.

The reason behind the weakness of these Tatar nationalist organisations was that compared to nationalism, socialism was more relevant to the Tatar elites since it provided the Tatars with an ideological schema through which they could express their dissent against the Russian Empire. It should also be added that socialist political organisations were effective in organising mass action for equality, if not for outright independence.³³ Under those circumstances, the influential Tatar socialists such as Mulla Nur Vakhitov and Mir Said Sultan-Galiev joined Joseph Stalin's *Narkomnats* (People's Commissariat of Nationalities). They were given political and military training in the Central Muslim Military College. When Stalin formed the Central Muslim Commissariat in early 1918, his aim was to mobilise the Tatar socialists in his fight against Russian and non-Russian nationalism. Believing that the creation of an autonomous government for the Tatars and the Bashkirs could attract these peoples for the socialist cause, Stalin convened a conference on the determination of the boundaries and outlines of the Tatar-Bashkir Autonomy on 10-16 May 1918. In his speech, Joseph Stalin clarified what he meant by autonomy under a socialist state:

Autonomy is a form. The whole question is what class content is put into this form. The Soviet power is not at all opposed to autonomy. It is in favour of autonomy – but only such autonomy in which the entire power belongs to the workers and peasants, and in which the bourgeoisie of all nationalities are debarred not only from power, but even from participation in the election of government bodies. Such autonomy will be autonomy on a Soviet basis.³⁴

There were two barriers to the realisation of Tatar autonomy. The first of these barriers was the White Army's occupation of the Tatar territory during the civil war, which had started in May 1918. Although the White Army's occupation of Kazan resulted in the

³² *Idel* is the Tatar name for the Volga river.

³³ Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejaye, 'Muslim National Minorities in Revolution and Civil War', in *Soviet Nationalities in Strategic Perspective*, ed. S. Enders Wimbush, London: Croom Helm, 1985, pp.42-48.

³⁴ Joseph V. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, vol.4, Moscow: Politizdat, 1947, p.92.

total destruction of Tatar nationalists, the White forces were fighting against the Bolsheviks, and were not sympathetic to the idea of granting territorial autonomy to the Tatars. When the Bolsheviks defeated the White forces, and formed a Revolutionary Committee (*Revkom*) in Kazan in September 1919, it turned out that even the Bolsheviks were not ready to accept the autonomy of Tatars. In the Kazan *Revkom*, whose five members were Trotskist, there was not a single Tatar. Not surprisingly, the Kazan *Revkom* rejected the Tatar demands for territorial autonomy. Meanwhile, the Bashkir communists such as Sharaf Manatov pressurised the *Narkomnats* into granting autonomy to the Bashkirs on 23 March 1919.³⁵ The decision to form an autonomous state for the Bashkirs put the final nail to the coffin of the Tatar-Bashkir Autonomy project.

Rejecting the anti-federalist views of the Trotskist members of Kazan *Revkom*, Lenin and Stalin shared the idea that federal autonomy could be used to uproot Tatar nationalism. Consequently, the Politburo in Moscow created a commission for working out the formation and the delimitation of the borders of the Tatar Republic on 4 May 1920. Mir Said Sultan-Galiev and Sakhib Garey Said-Galiev were the only Tatars in the commission headed by Stalin. At the joint meeting of the Central Executive Committee (TsIK) of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the *Narkomnats* on 27 May 1920, a resolution was adopted on the formation of the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (TASSR) as a part of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR). Nevertheless, the TASSR's borders left 75 percent of the Tatars out of the Republic. TASSR was not an autonomous republic created solely for the Tatars since the Republican population was composed mainly of Russians (39 percent) as well as Tatars (51 percent).³⁶

The TASSR was a weak state that was totally dependent on Moscow for its survival. The level of autonomy granted to the TASSR's *Sovnarkom*, (Council of People's Commissars) by the TsIK and *Sovnarkom* of the RSFSR in May 1920 reflected that the RSFSR was not sincere in recognising Tatar autonomy. While the Education, Justice, Health, Agriculture, Social Security and Internal Affairs Commissariats were subordinate only to the Tatar TsIK, the RSFSR was able to supervise the activities of the following

³⁵ Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, pp.133-138.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p.138.

Commissariats: Supply, Finance, Labour, Economy, Worker Peasant Inspectorate and the Administration of Post and Telegraph.³⁷

Lenin sought to use the Tatar autonomy to attract other Muslim groups to Soviet rule. He personally selected the pro-Moscow Tatar Bolshevik Sakhb Garey Said-Galiev (not to be confused with Mir Said Sultan-Galiev) as the Head of the Revolutionary Committee (*Revkom*) designed to create the Tatar government on 25 June 1920.³⁸ Following Moscow's line strictly, Said-Galiev announced that the Tatar national autonomy should be counterbalanced with party centralisation. Moreover, he criticised Tatar nationalism, but not chauvinism on the part of the Russians. Thus, from the perspective of the Soviet centre in Moscow, the extremely submissive Said-Galiev was the ideal candidate for the leadership of the TASSR.³⁹

Just like the extremely submissive Tatar Bolshevik leaders, the formal state structures of the TASSR were accountable not to the Tatar people, but to Moscow. Although TASSR had its Supreme Soviet, Council of Ministers and Presidium, none of these bodies had real authority. The only organ that held real power was the Regional Committee (*Obkom*) of the Russian Communist Party (bolsheviks) [RCP(b)], which was controlled by the Soviet centre in Moscow. The First Bureau of the Tatar *Obkom* formed in August 1920 included two Tatars (Said-Galiev and Iskhak Kazakov) and seven Russians. This bureau was a local equivalent of the Politburo in Moscow, the leading party organ responsible for daily decision-making. Moreover, the First Secretary of Tatar *Obkom* was Aleksandr Taniaev. The Soviet cadre policy of usually appointing a person from a Slavic nationality to the highest positions was used in the TASSR to prevent the Tatar elites from adopting national communism to the detriment of Moscow's priorities.⁴⁰ Unlike the Tatar *Obkom*, which was mainly dominated by the Russians, the TASSR's Council of Ministers, which had insignificant powers, was dominated mainly by the Tatars. In the Council of Ministers, there were seven Tatars as compared to six non-Tatars. However, Russians were controlling the important posts in the Council of Ministers, such as the ministries of

³⁷ *Obrazovanie Tatarskoi ASSR: Sbornik dokumentov i materialov*, Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1963, p.230.

³⁸ M. Saidasheva, *Lenin i sotsialisticheskoe stroitel'stvo v Tatarii, 1918-1923*, Moscow, 1969, p.86.

³⁹ Daniel E. Schafer, 'The Politics of National Equality Under early NEP: Factions in the Tatar Republic, 1920-1924', (hereafter, 'The Politics of National Equality'), *Central Asian Survey*, vol.9, no.2, p.59.

⁴⁰ John H. Miller, 'Cadre Policy in Nationality Areas: Recruitment of CPSU First and Second Secretaries in Non-Russian Republics of the USSR', *Soviet Studies*, vol.29, no.1, 1977, pp.3-4.

finance and the secret service (*ChK*- Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counterrevolution, Sabotage and Speculation).⁴¹

The First Wave of Tatar National Communism

Tatar national communism emerged as an ideological expression of the resentment of some Tatar communists at Moscow's chauvinistic treatment of the Tatars and the TASSR. For the Tatar national communists, a 'genuinely' communist perspective on the question of national autonomy required Moscow to treat its nations equally, and not to control them strictly. Thus, the first wave of Tatar national communism emerged as reactions to the attempts of the Soviet and Russian centres in Moscow to keep the TASSR under the strict supervision of the Soviet State and the RCP(b).

Having established the dominance of pro-Moscow officials in the political institutions of the TASSR, Moscow embarked on stripping Kazan of its role as the political centre of the Russian Muslims. For this purpose, the First Tatar Obkom Conference was held in Kazan in August 1920. Stalin personally attended the conference, and declared ideological deviation as a significant problem in the TASSR. At the root of the problem lay Stalin's dissatisfaction with Mir Said Sultan-Galiev, one of the informal leaders of Tatar communists, who challenged his drive towards centralisation in the Communist Party. Advocating a class struggle for the equality of nations as well as workers, Sultan-Galiev argued that the oppression of Muslim peoples at the hands of the colonial powers (including Tatars at the hands of Russians) made them proletarians. Influenced by pan-Turkist ideas, Sultan-Galiev called for the establishment of a separate state for the Muslim peoples of the former Russian Empire that would be called 'the Republic of Turan'.⁴²

⁴¹ Schafer, 'The Politics of National Equality', p.58.

⁴² Sultan-Galiev was the highest-ranking Muslim in the Communist Party. In addition to being the Chairperson of the Central Muslim Commissariat, he was also the Chairperson of the Muslim Military Collegium and the Chief editor of *Zhizn' natsional'nostei* (Life of Nationalities). Alexandre Bennigsen and S. Enders Wimbush, *Muslim National Communism in the Soviet Union*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979, pp.37-68.

Nevertheless, Sultan-Galiev was disappointed at the Congress of the Peoples of the East held in Baku in September 1920, when the majority of the delegates rejected his thesis that the Eastern peoples were proletarian nations par excellence, and pointed to the revolutionary potential of the Western proletariat. During the same month, the pro-Moscow Tatars strengthened their position further in the elections for the Supreme Soviet of the TASSR. The emerging Supreme Soviet elected Burkhan Mansurov as the Chairperson of the Tatar TsIK and Said-Galiev as the Head of the Council of Peoples' Commissars (*Sovnarkom*). Consequently, pro-Moscow Tatar leaders dominated all of the important positions.⁴³

When Moscow had been busy with crushing the nationalist *Basmachi* movement in Central Asia until the mid-1920s, it opted for relaxing its control over Tatar national communists, so that it could prevent the spread of pan-Turkist *Basmachi* movement to Tataria. Consequently, the right-wing Tatars (meaning national communist Tatars) captured power at the third regional party conference held on 23-24 June 1921. At this conference, Keshaf Mukhtarov, the right wing former Commissar of Health replaced Said-Galiev, the Head of the Tatar TsIK. Rauf Sabirov occupied this position between 1922 and 1923. Both Mukhtarov and Sabirov were pragmatic politicians trying to accommodate the interests of the Tatars with those of Moscow through redefining the Bolshevik project as it aimed to improve the underdeveloped material conditions of the Tatars to that of the advanced nations, such as the Russians.⁴⁴ In this way, the Tatar leadership presented its calls for greater autonomy as a 'genuinely' socialist desire, which might be opposed only if one adhered to Great Russian chauvinism.

The status of the TASSR in Russia was determined after the formation of the USSR on 30 December 1922 at the tenth All-Russian (first All-Union) Congress of Soviets by the RSFSR, Belarus, Transcaucasia, Ukraine, Khorezm and Bukhara. Just like other national homelands in the Soviet Union, the TASSR bore the name of the Tatar nationality. However, the Soviet Union established a hierarchy of national homelands through organising them into Union Republics (*soiuznye respubliki*), Autonomous Republics (*avtonomnye respubliki*), Autonomous Regions (*avtonomnye oblasti*) and Autonomous

⁴³ Schafer, 'The Politics of National Equality', pp.58-59.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.60-64.

Districts (*avtonomnye okruga*). The predominantly Russian-populated areas were organised as regions (*oblasti*) in the RSFSR.⁴⁵ In this hierarchy, the TASSR was not granted a Union Republic status because it lacked an external border. By contrast, even the Georgians, who were less numerous than the Tatars, were given a Union republic status simply because the Georgian SSR had an external border. Many Tatar national communists, such as Sultan-Galiev, perceived this as a discrimination against themselves. When Sultan-Galiev became a member of the Tatar TsIK in 1923, he criticised the second-class status of autonomous republics in his speech at the twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party. As a result of this speech, he was expelled from the Communist Party, and arrested in May 1923 for 'counterrevolutionary nationalist conspiracy against the Soviets'. This demonstrated the unwillingness of Moscow to tolerate even the discussion of the Union Republic status for the Tatars.⁴⁶

Moscow's relations with the TASSR under the Soviet Union, which was formally a federation, were imperial in nature. Dominic Lieven convincingly argues that the Soviet Union was indeed an empire, with one ethnic group (the Russians) dominating the others, simultaneously drawing on non-Russian elites as imperial servants. Although it was true that Russia and the Russians did not benefit materially from the Soviet Union at the expense of other nationalities, the Soviet Union had an authoritarian control of the non-Russian nationalities and exploited them through a centrally planned economy in the name of Communism.⁴⁷ This imperial perspective was reflected in the well-known principle of *democratic centralism*, whereby the central Party organs dominated the periphery. The first Soviet Constitution, which was ratified on 31 January 1924, gave Moscow a monopoly of jurisdiction over such important areas as diplomatic representation, budget control, and military organisation (article 2). The exclusive jurisdiction of the republics was limited to the spheres of agriculture, education, justice, public health, and social security (articles 67 and 68).⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Sofiia Iakubovskaia, *Razvitie SSSR kak soiuznogo gosudarstva, 1922-1926 gg.*, Moscow: Nauka, 1972.

⁴⁶ After being freed in 1924, Sultan-Galiev was arrested again in 1928 for treason, and sentenced to ten years' hard labour in the Solovetskii camp. He was executed in December 1939. Bulat F. Sultanbekov, 'Mir Said Sultan-Galiev: His Character and Fate', *Central Asian Survey*, vol.9, no.2, 1990, pp.113-114.

⁴⁷ Dominic Lieven, 'The Russian Empire and the Soviet Union as Imperial Politics', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol.30, no.4, 1995, pp.608-611.

⁴⁸ The First Congress of Soviets of the USSR adopted the first Soviet Constitution on 30 December 1922. Miervaldis Ramans, 'Socialist Federalism: Federalism and Democratic Centralism', in *Soviet*

Moscow gained the upper hand in controlling the course of developments in the TASSR only after it was able to suppress the *Basmachi* rebellion in Central Asia in the mid-twenties. Khadzi Gabidullin, a strong critic of Sultan-Galiev, replaced Mukhtarov as the Chairperson of the TsIK of the TASSR in April 1924. Furthermore, the Secretary of the Tatar Obkom, Ivan Morozov, demanded an investigation into the activities of the Tatar national communists. Finally, the leftists became successful in the party elections due to the ethnic make-up of the Communist Party, which was in favour of the ethnic Russians.⁴⁹

The Tatar national communists continued to Tatarise the Republic even after the removal of Sultan-Galiev and his close associates from the governing positions in the TASSR. Despite the restoration of the pro-Moscow regime in the TASSR, the state structure of the TASSR was still filled with national communists advocating greater national autonomy for the Tatars. The policy of *korenizatsiia*, seeking roots in the native populations played an important role in the Tatarisation of the Republic. The objective of this policy was to develop local elites 'national in form but socialist in content'. Since this policy required the use of Tatar language in the conduct of some administrative services in the TASSR, it resulted in the upward mobility of the Tatars through preferential access to party membership and higher education. In order to promote loyal Tatar Bolsheviks, non-Bolshevik Tatar intelligentsia were invited to teach in the schools given the small number of educated Bolsheviks among the Tatars. In this way, the Tatars penetrated into the pro-Moscow communist government in Kazan.⁵⁰

The Tatar communists actively supported the process of Tatarisation both in culture and administration. At the Congress of Terminology in 1924, the participants called for the promotion of Tatar words and the elimination of mostly Russian borrowed foreign words. Moreover, at the Congress of the Tatar-Bashkir Teachers and Intellectuals that was held in Kazan, it was argued that the Tatarisation of institutions was possible with the recruitment of educated Tatar personnel with education in Tatar culture. Accordingly,

Federalism: Nationalism and Economic De-centralization, ed. Alastair McAuley, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991, p.129.

⁴⁹ Schafer, 'The Politics of National Equality', pp.68-70.

⁵⁰ Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, pp.150-154.

800 Tatar personnel were educated in Tatar language in 1925 for the purpose of talking to the Tatar people in their native language. Furthermore, at the First Turcological Congress held in Baku in 1926 the Latin alphabet was adopted for Tatar language.⁵¹ The revival of the Tatar culture was soon followed by the Tatarisation of the political cadres, since the Tatar population was also to be involved in the work of the government, the party, and the local Soviet organs. Consequently, the TASSR's Party and Government became the bastions of criticism towards Moscow.

Stalin's Response: Purge of the Tatar Elites

Moscow became worried about the Tatarisation of politics and culture in the TASSR. In line with Stalin's directives, the Party Control Commission arrested Keshaf Mukhtarov (Chairperson of the TsIK of the TASSR), Rauf Sabirov (First Secretary of the Tatar Obkom), Kasym Mansurov (Commissar for Propaganda), M. Burundukov (Commissar for Education), V. Iskhakov (Vice President of the Tatar Gosplan), and M. Badaili (First Secretary of the Tatar Komsomol) for being national communist in 1928. Two years later, the Tatar Obkom was subordinated to the headquarters of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in Moscow, and the Tatar Supreme Soviet was subordinated to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. The purge of the top leadership was soon followed by a general purge of the Tatar party organisation. In 1930 alone, 2,056 Tatar communists representing 13.4 percent of the total party membership were expelled from the Party. Moreover, 2,273 Tatars received the death penalty for their 'nationalist deviation'.⁵²

In addition to the leading political figures, the economic and cultural bases of Tatar national communism were also targeted. The peasant problem, which was thought to be feeding Tatar nationalism, was solved through collectivisation, and the decision was taken on the liquidation of the kulaks in TASSR on 16 February 1930. In the cultural sphere, following the closure of the Society of Tatarology and the Oriental Institute in 1930, the Union of Tatar Proletarian Writers and the Tatar State Publishing House were targeted in 1932. Finally, Cyrillic was adopted to replace Latin for the Tatar language in

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Cited in Devletshin, *Sovetskii Tatarstan*, p.196.

1939. The OGPU (United Main Political Administration [1922-1934]) and later the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs [1934-1953]), which were the main secret services of the Soviet Union until the replacement of the NKVD by the KGB (Committee of State Security) in 1953, played a very important role in pressurising the TASSR leadership into adopting these measures.⁵³ This is not surprising since the secret police formed the backbone of Moscow's policies of controlling the TASSR throughout the Soviet period.

When the leadership of the TASSR raised the issue of enhancing the status of the Republic during the discussions for the 1936 USSR Constitution, Stalin rejected this proposal due to the TASSR's lack of external borders. Consequently, the new Constitution of the USSR, which was adopted on 5 December 1936, upgraded the autonomous status of various republics, but not that of the TASSR. The Tatars did not see this as a major setback, since Stalin's regime was too personalistic, and operating beyond the legal framework. For example, although the Union Republics were granted the right to secede, any attempt to exercise this right was politically unthinkable for their leaders.⁵⁴

The TASSR adopted its own constitution in 1937, which was ratified by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet on 2 July 1940. This constitution reflected the main principles of the 1936 USSR and RSFSR constitutions. The autonomy of the TASSR was defined in articles 13-18. According to article 13, all issues except those cited in article 14 of the USSR constitution and article 18 of the RSFSR constitution were left under the Tatar autonomy. Since the USSR and RSFSR constitutions granted extensive powers to the Soviet and Russian centres in Moscow, the TASSR's autonomy was considerably limited. According to article 21, the Supreme Soviet was the highest organ of power in the TASSR. The Supreme Soviet, which met only for a few days every year, had an exclusive authority only in electing its own Presidium. The Council of Ministers, which was more important than the Supreme Soviet in terms of the daily running of the republican affairs, was composed of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and the ministers for Public Service, Internal Affairs, Municipal Economy, Health, Culture and Land.⁵⁵

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp.197-200.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.202.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.203-207.

In reality, the main body of decision-making in the TASSR was the Obkom of the CPSU, rather than the Council of Ministers or the Supreme Soviet. The TASSR's Council of Ministers was simply implementing the decisions of the Tatar Obkom, which was controlled by the USSR Central Committee Politburo. Moreover, the Supreme Soviets of the RSFSR and the USSR limited the legislative functions of the Tatar Supreme Soviet. The TASSR had 11 representatives at the USSR Supreme Soviet Chamber of Nationalities. Moreover, one of the 12 Vice-Presidents of the Presidium of the RSFSR was Tatar. These were very limited channels for the TASSR to influence decisions in Moscow. As compared to the previous *status quo*, the autonomy of the TASSR was narrowed by the 1937 Constitution. The supreme bodies of the TASSR were not even able to take a decision that would concern renaming a city without the approval of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. Regarding important matters like the use of the republican economic resources, finance, the regulation of wages, education, culture, health and social security, the TASSR was treated almost the same as the usual administrative territorial formations.⁵⁶

The beginning of the Second World War in 1939 halted Stalinist purges in the TASSR as the focus of Moscow shifted from the TASSR to the borderlands such as the Caucasus. Thus, systematic purges were carried out in other non-Russian regions. Stalin deported Germans, Chechens, Ingush, Crimean Tatars, Karachais, Kalmyks, Meskhetians and Adygeis *en masse* for crimes allegedly committed by some of their members during the Second World War. Following the end of the war, Koreans, Balts and Poles were also deported.⁵⁷

The Second Wave of Tatar National Communism

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Stalin was confident about his control in the Soviet Union, especially in the inner core, where the TASSR was located. Given that the Soviet and the Russian centres in Moscow were in harmony during and after World War II, the Tatars were worried about the possibility of Great Russian chauvinism. In order to

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.204.

elicit the loyalty of the Tatars to the Soviet State, a Tatar cleric, Abdurrakhman Rasulaev, convinced Stalin to establish under his authority the Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of the European Part of Russia and Siberia (DUMES) where the Tatar language was used in Ufa.⁵⁸

Having seen no vacuum of power in Moscow that could be manipulated to enlarge their room for manoeuvre, the Tatar elites sought to maximise their interests through an over-compliant mode of behaviour. The assumption was that if they proved that they deserved extra benefits, Moscow could grant them greater concessions and privileges. Without any fear of the possibility that the Tatar elites could adopt national communism, Moscow started the practice of appointing Tatars to the governing positions in the TASSR, which continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. A loyal communist Tatar, Said Shafaraev, served as the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers between 1943 and 1950. Between 1944 and 1957, a pro-Moscow Tatar, Zinnat Muratov, served as the First Secretary of the Tatar Obkom. Even his Second Secretary was a Tatar, Mukhammed Shafikov. All of these leaders were extremely subservient to Moscow, as they were mainly interested in increasing their personal wealth, and in benefiting from the industrialisation programme in the TASSR. Their compliance is also related to their need to appease the increasing number of ethnic Russians, who immigrated to the Republic following the discovery of oil and the beginning of the industrialisation process in the aftermath of the Second World War.⁵⁹

Furthermore, the compliant attitude of the TASSR's leadership towards Moscow was reinforced when Nikita Khrushchev, who became First Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU in November 1953, started to pursue a policy of de-Stalinisation following his 'secret speech' at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in February 1956.⁶⁰ Khrushchev implemented a policy of economic decentralisation through setting up regional economic councils (*sovnarkhozy*) from 1957 until his replacement by Leonid Brezhnev in October 1964. According to this policy, the local Party and the Supreme Soviets, including those of the TASSR, gained some leverage over economic enterprises.

⁵⁷ Robert Conquest, *The Nation Killers*, London: Macmillan, 1970, pp.102-113.

⁵⁸ Ya'acov Roi, 'Islam in the Soviet Union after the Second World War', *Religion, State & Society*, vol.24, nos. 2/3, 1996, pp.160-164.

⁵⁹ Devletshin, *Sovetskii Tatarstan*, pp.209-215.

The main sources of income for the regional governments were the turnover tax stemming through Moscow's transfers and the payments from the profits of local companies. On the expenditure side, local administrations financed their own social and cultural programmes.⁶¹

The drive towards decentralisation was extended to the political sphere at the 24th CPSU Congress, which formally granted rights to *Obkoms* to scrutinise the work of the Union-level Soviet State apparatus in their own regions. In this way, the Tatar *Obkom* increased its control over the implementation of Moscow's policies in the TASSR. This move increased the power of the *Obkom* over the activities of the state structures of the TASSR and its Supreme Soviet, which had no autonomy from party supervision and no right to intervene into the details of their functioning. In this sense, the function of the Tatar Council of Ministers and the Supreme Soviets became one of giving legitimacy to the practices of the local *Obkom*. This meant that the CPSU, to which the Tatar *Obkom* was subordinate, gained full control of the TASSR, provided that the local Tatar communist leadership stuck to the party line.

The second wave of Tatar national communism took shape when the tension between those aiming to abolish ethnic republics and those aiming to maintain these republics came to the surface in the 1960s. Those Soviet leaders favouring the abolition of ethnic republics declared that the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution in 1967 was the time to celebrate the birth of the Soviet man (*Sovetskii chelovek*). Assuming that ethnic relations among the Soviet nations progressed dialectically from flowering (*rastsvet*) through rapprochement (*sblizhenie*) towards merger (*sliianie*), this group saw no need for the existence of ethnic republics, since, for them, ethnic differences had already lost their significance.⁶²

In opposition to these Soviet leaders, the Tatar elites, such as K. Faseev, the Head of the Propaganda and Agitation of the Tatar *Obkom*, argued that there was still a need for ethnic republics. According to Faseev, the post-War stability in the Soviet Union was

⁶⁰ William J. Tompson, *Khrushchev: A Political Life*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995, pp.143-173.

⁶¹ Donna Bahry, *Outside Moscow: Power Politics and Budgetary Policy in the Soviet Republics*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1987, p.12.

⁶² Cohen, *Russian Imperialism*, p.100.

partly due to the roles of the ethnic republics in stabilising the situation in the regions.⁶³ Appreciating the positive contributions of the TASSR to the stability of the Soviet Union, the leaders of TASSR claimed that the TASSR deserved a Union Republic status, which could have made things better for the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union.

Although the Tatar leaders were seeking to upgrade the status of the TASSR, they were by no means in favour of a popular nationalist mobilisation against Moscow. The reason being that they were mainly interested in maintaining regional stability and increasing the economic fringe benefits of their Party work. As Steven L. Solnick argues, the increase in opportunistic and rent-seeking behaviours of the Soviet officials played a very important role in undermining the Soviet Union's state authority in the eyes of the Soviet bureaucrats as well as ordinary people.⁶⁴

Brezhnev's Response: Accommodation of the Tatar Elites

Moscow could have eliminated the Tatar resentments about the second-class status of the TASSR through purges as Stalin did. However, Leonid Brezhnev promised the republics a substantial degree of local political and cultural autonomy, and security of tenure to their leaders in exchange for supporting his policies. For Brezhnev, economic concessions and privileges for the regional leaders could solve this problem since this could transform the problems of ethnicity into technical issues of resource distribution and patron-client relations.⁶⁵ As G. Bingham Powell notes:

In a social structure in which most citizens are involved in personal patron-client relationships, ... it will be difficult to mobilize citizens on the basis of national group appeals or organizations, because their orientations will be to the locality and the patron.⁶⁶

Jerry F. Hough's classic study of regional party leaders explains why a clientelistic formula accommodated the Tatar leadership. For Hough, since the regional party leaders

⁶³ K. Faseev, *Na putiakh proleterskogo internatsionalizma*, Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1971, pp.24-25.

⁶⁴ Steven L. Solnick, *Stealing the State: Control and Collapse in Soviet Institutions*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998, p.24.

⁶⁵ Thomas H. Rigby, *Political Elites in the USSR: Central Leaders and Local Cadres from Lenin to Gorbachev*, Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1990, pp.220-245.

were responsible for their territory and population, they had to see that the population was fed, taxes were paid, and law and order were maintained.⁶⁷ The Tatar leaders were middlemen not only serving the Soviet and the Russian centres in Moscow, but also, ruling their multi-ethnic population, composed mainly of the Tatars and the Russians. They had a wide autonomy in regulating matters related to the agricultural sector. However, industrial managers, whose funding and orders came from Moscow, ran the TASSR's huge enterprises. Thus, the Tatar leaders needed to establish good relations with the industrial managers in order to receive greater housing and local services from these enterprises. This encouraged the formation of closely-knit local patronage networks as survival mechanisms in the TASSR.

While Andrei Kirilenko, the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR, and F. Panin, the Second Secretary of Tatar Obkom, were ensuring that the interests of Moscow and the local ethnic Russians were secured, Fikrat Tabeev, the First Secretary of the Tatar Obkom, who ran the TASSR from 1960 to 1986, developed clientelistic relations with Moscow and local industrial managers.⁶⁸ All of the Tatar leaders, including Tabeev and his close friend Salikh Batyev, Chairperson of the Supreme Soviet, criticised ethnic nationalism and valued the importance of respecting the 'friendship of nations' (*druzhba narodov*).⁶⁹ The fact that their patronage networks included non-Tatars as well as Tatars necessitated the adoption of such an internationalist ideology.

The way in which Moscow accommodated the Tatar leaders can be seen in the example of the Kama Automobile Factory (KamAZ) in the TASSR's Naberezhnye Chelny. Leonid Brezhnev personally supported the construction of this factory since the USSR needed millions of modern heavy trucks to serve its military-industrial complex in the late sixties. The capacity of the Gorkii Automobile Factory, built by Stalin in the 1930s, was not enough. This was the inspiration for the founding of KamAZ in 1969. The site was chosen taking account of the region's access to the Volga via the Kama river and the abundance of labour and energy resources. Another important factor was the Tatar

⁶⁶ G. Bingham Powell, *Contemporary Democracy: Participation, Stability, and Violence*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1982, pp.86-87.

⁶⁷ Jerry F. Hough, *The Soviet Prefects: The Local Party Organs in Industrial Decision Making*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969, pp.235-244.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.206.

⁶⁹ Devletshin, *Sovetskii Tatarstan*, pp.210-211.

leaders' persistent request that the autonomous republic should be compensated for the two billion tons of oil extracted in the TASSR. Furthermore, the Central Committee Secretary Mikhail Suslov wanted to promote his native Central Volga region. Finally, the project also contributed to Moscow's policies of Russifying the TASSR, since several hundred thousand workers arrived from all over the USSR to build and work in the auto giant. The general director of KamAZ, by virtue of his position, held the rank of USSR first deputy minister of the automobile industry.⁷⁰

Overall, the blossoming of organisations of survival based on personal sympathies and financial partnership cutting across ethnic lines pleased the Tatar elites, and allowed Moscow to contain Tatar nationalism. Many Tatar leaders benefited from the KamAZ project so that they refrained from pressing too hard for a Union Republic status. Consequently, as was the case during the discussions of Stalin's constitution in 1936, the Tatar elites were unable again to raise the Autonomous Republic status of the Republic to a Union Republic status in the Brezhnev constitution, which was adopted on 7 October 1977.⁷¹

Brezhnev's policy of leaving people in place and when necessary making new appointments from within the Tatar Obkom strengthened the tendency towards Tatarisation in the Republican Party and state structures. This solution provided a strong basis for the consolidation of the Tatar elites. It was under the brief leadership of Iurii Andropov, who headed the USSR between 10 November 1982 and 9 February 1984, that the existence of growing ethnic tensions was first acknowledged in 1983. In the TASSR, there were several street fights between Tatar and Russian students. Social scientists were mobilised for the study of ethnic relations both at the micro and macro levels. The KGB (Committee of State Security) significantly focused on ethnic relations, and there was a renewed crackdown on nationalist dissidents.⁷² Because of the fear of reprisals from Moscow, the Tatar leaders were mainly silent during this period, as they refrained from manipulating these gang fights for their own advantage.

⁷⁰ Mary McAuley, *Russia's Politics of Uncertainty*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp.91-94.

⁷¹ Leokadia M. Drobizheva, 'Comparison of Elite Groups in Tatarstan, Sakha, Magadan, and Orenburg', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.15, no.4, 1999, p.390.

⁷² Cohen, *Russian Imperialism*, p.109.

Perestroika and the Tatar Elites

The final episode of Tatar national communism under the Soviet Union took place when Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the CPSU on 10 March 1985. Gorbachev started to implement his structural reforms between 1987 and 1991. While accepting that the USSR was experiencing a political crisis, with its declining economy and ideology, Gorbachev mentioned the nationalities policy as an arena of remarkable success in his following statement:

The USSR represents a truly unique example in the history of human civilisation. These are the fruits of the nationality policy launched by Lenin. The revolution and socialism have done away national oppression and inequality, and ensured economic, intellectual and cultural progress for all nations and nationalities. If the nationality problem had not been solved in principle, our state would not have survived nor the republics formed a community based on brotherhood and co-operation, respect and mutual assistance.⁷³

An opposite picture of developments was given by Zbigniew Brzezinski. According to Brzezinski, Gorbachev's decentralisation provided an opportunity for long-suppressed national grievances to surface. Besides, for Brzezinski, nationalism was 'nurtured, rather than diluted, in the communist experience'.⁷⁴ However, it was very difficult to organise the nationalist mobilisation of the masses in the Soviet Union. As Alexander Motyl argues, the Soviet Union exercised its state power effectively in preventing non-Russians from rebelling:

At some point, non-Russians may massively want to rebel. But will they? As long as the public sphere is occupied and more important, as long as the KGB remains intact, the de-privatisation of anti-state attitudes will be problematic, anti-state collectivities and elites will be unlikely to mobilize, alliances between workers and intellectuals will not materialise, and rebellion, revolt, and insurrection will be well-nigh impossible. Because they cannot rebel, non-Russians will not rebel.⁷⁵

In addition to the disunity of non-Russian elites and masses, the underdevelopment of civil society in the Soviet Union should also be taken into account in explaining why the

⁷³ Mikhail S. Gorbachev, *Perestroika i novoe myshlenie dlia nashei strany i dlia vsego mira*, Moscow: Politizdat, 1988, p.104.

⁷⁴ Zbigniew Brzezinski, 'Post-Communist Nationalism', *Foreign Affairs*, vol.68, no.5, 1990, p.1.

⁷⁵ Alexander J. Motyl, *Will the Non-Russians Rebel? State, Ethnicity and Stability in the USSR*, Ithaca: NY: Cornell University Press, 1987, p.170.

non-Russian masses lacked the social organisation for rebelling. In contrast to the Soviet non-Russian masses, the Soviet regional elites had functioning political organisations (republican institutions) that could be used to mobilise the masses against Moscow.⁷⁶ Thus, it became very important for Moscow to accommodate regional elites when Gorbachev's reforms divided the Soviet elites in the late eighties. Instead of strengthening the Soviet leadership, the reforms served to empower the opposition forces of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev erroneously assumed that economic decentralisation could increase economic interdependence, and weaken the drive towards disintegration.⁷⁷ However, his reforms undermined the dominant role of the Party as the single co-ordinating force, thereby jeopardising the system as a whole. Gorbachev's attacks on bureaucracy and patronage encouraged attacks on central authority and its local representatives in non-Russian republics, especially those in the Baltic and the Caucasus.⁷⁸

Under pressure from mobilised masses and the Soviet and the Russian centres in Moscow, the TASSR's leaders did not adopt the policies pursued by some other republican leaders, who either suppressed the local population by picturing them as radical deviationists, as in Central Asia, or sided with the local population against Moscow as in the Baltics during the final days of the Soviet Union. It was not in their interest to suppress the local population, which could easily be mobilised against Moscow. Since, there was a low level of ethnic mobilisation in Tataria, the Tatar elites saw no challenge from the nationalists, and sought to consolidate their positions in the Soviet state structure with their constructive participation. The Nationalities Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU at the end of 1989 offered representatives of the TASSR an opportunity to articulate Tatar resentment at the Republic's second-class status.

At the Nationalities Plenum, Gumer Usmanov, the First Secretary of the Tatar Obkom, highlighted the concerns of the Tatars especially in controlling their economic resources. In his speech, Usmanov said that

⁷⁶ Mark R. Beissinger, 'Elites and Ethnic Identities in Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics', in *The Post-Soviet Nations: Perspectives on the Demise of the USSR*, ed. Alexander J. Motyl, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, p.151.

⁷⁷ Stephan Kux, 'Soviet Federalism', *Problems of Communism*, vol.34, no.2, 1990, pp.6-9.

Comrades! According to the specialists' forecasts, Tataria possesses considerable reserves of petroleum bitumen. The province party committee has repeatedly gone to the USSR State Planning Committee and the Ministry of the Petroleum Industry with concrete proposals for working these reserves. The proposals have met with understanding, but so far the question has not been resolved. ... I appeal to Comrade Dinkov, Minister of the Petroleum Industry: We now have the possibility of creating an autonomous subdivision for the working of bitumen deposits, and we hope this question will be resolved in the near future.⁷⁹

Tufan Minnullin, Secretary of the Board of the USSR Writers' Union and USSR Supreme Soviet deputy from Kukmor electoral district of the TASSR said that

We all know the old truth that only equals can be friends. That is why this truth is set down in our Constitution and backed up by article 36. But in this basic law, in articles 109, 111 and 118, this truth is called into question. Why, for example, do Union republics get to elect 32 deputies from national territorial electoral districts, while autonomous republics elect only 11. Why are some republics represented in the Council of Nationalities by 11 deputies and others by 4? Where is the logic? What, in essence, distinguishes Union republics from autonomous republics? Even at our Congress the Union republics are being put into a special class, while we have been relegated to the role of listeners. Why has this opposition continued for so many years?... I think it is necessary to equalise the status of all the national republics, without dividing them into Union and autonomous republics. (Applause).⁸⁰

At the 1989 Nationalities Plenum, Gumer Usmanov reported that a poll showed that 67 percent of respondents wanted to see the TASSR's status raised to that of a union republic. According to Usmanov, even the top-level officials in the Nationalities Plenum approached the Tatar position positively.⁸¹ Overall, it can be argued that the Tatar elites were successful in using the Nationalities Plenum as an occasion for explaining their position on the status of the TASSR effectively.

The real push for a Union Republic status in the TASSR emerged with the rise of Mintimer Shaimiev, an ethnic Tatar, as the First Secretary of Tatar Obkom in October 1989.⁸² Being concerned mainly with consolidating their networks of power in the

⁷⁸ Victor Zaslavsky, 'The Evolution of Separatism in Soviet Society under Gorbachev', in *From Union to Commonwealth: Nationalism and Separatism in the Soviet Republics*, eds. Gail W. Lapidus, et. al., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p.72.

⁷⁹ *Pravda*, 3 March 1989.

⁸⁰ *Pravda*, 21 September 1989.

⁸¹ *Pravda*, 22 September 1989.

⁸² For the biography of Mintimer Shaimiev, which is explored briefly in Chapter Two, see R. A. Mustafin and A. Ch. Khasanov, *Pervyi prezident Tatarstana: Mintimer Shaimiev*, Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1995.

TASSR, and expanding their privileges in the Soviet system, Shaimiev and his supporters' understanding of nationalism was influenced by their communist *nomenklatura* background. This position revolved around their demands for greater political, economic and cultural autonomy.

The TASSR's local bureaucrats sought to pursue their own interests, mostly in the political and cultural spheres, because the centre's control over the economy was protected under the command planning system. In 1990, 98 percent of industrial enterprises in the TASSR were under Union or Russian control, while the Republic ran only 2 percent of 'secondary' enterprises. However, if we consider the ethnic origins of enterprise managers in 1989, the Tatars had a very high representation. In the TASSR, the Tatars formed 48.6 percent of the population, but controlled 64.1 percent of the leading posts in the enterprises (See Table A4.4).⁸³ With the centre's tacit approval, these enterprise managers openly instituted preferential treatment for the Tatar population in Tataria's political and cultural life. From this perspective, Shaimiev and his supporters had nothing to loose in stressing their Tatar background and demanding concessions for themselves in return for their service in 'solving' the national problems of the Tatars.

Depicting the Autonomous Republic status of the TASSR as responsible for the national problems of the Tatars, the Tatar elites sought to challenge the Russian centre in Moscow, whose representatives became increasingly critical of the financial transfers from Moscow to non-Russian regions. Thus, they saw the Soviet centre in Moscow as their ally, because granting a union republic status to the TASSR might not harm the interests of the Soviet elites, although the RSFSR elites would certainly refuse to grant this status to the TASSR. Another ally of the TASSR leadership was Tatar ethnic nationalist organisations, which will be explored in Chapter Four. Initially, these Tatar ethnic nationalist organisations were in alliance with the Shaimiev leadership, and criticised mainly the Russian rather than the Soviet centre in Moscow.⁸⁴

⁸³ Lev S. Perepelkin, 'Istoki mezhetnicheskogo konflikta v Tatarii', *Mir Rossii*, vol.1, no.1, 1992, p.105.

⁸⁴ Gabdulbar Faizrakhmanov, 'Istoriia tvoritsia na nashikh glazakh', *Tatarstan*, no.7, 1997, p.5.

The Parade of Sovereignties: the TASSR Challenges the RSFSR

While the Tatars were pressing for greater autonomy, the Russians were divided into conservatives of the Russian Communist Party defending the Union as it was and democrats led by Boris El'tsin seeking a reform of the Union in a confederal form. El'tsin believed that the Union could be saved with a sovereign Russia. It was the loss of CPSU monopoly over political activity after the abolition of Article 6 of the Constitution in March 1990 that created the potential for substantial political restructuring. The 4 March 1990 elections in the Republics were the first multiparty elections in Russia with the Democratic Russia election bloc challenging CPSU rule.⁸⁵ In these elections, the supporters of Shaimiev (130 out of total 250 deputies) gained the majority of the seats in the Tatar Supreme Soviet. The opposition groups in the Tatar Supreme Soviet included the Tatar nationalist *Tatarstan* bloc, with 70 members and the pro-Moscow *Soglasie* bloc, with 50 members.⁸⁶

Rejecting the proposal of Oleg Rumiantsev, the Executive Secretary of the Constitutional Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, to turn the RSFSR into a federation organised into 50 new territorial divisions based on the German *länder* model (*zemli* in Russian), the TASSR leadership insisted that the Republic should enjoy the rights of a Union Republic rather than a Autonomous Republic.⁸⁷ Rafael Khakimov clarified the TASSR's position as follows:

It is essential to equalise the rights of federal and autonomous republics as sovereign governments. If a republic exists, it must be sovereign. Otherwise, it amounts to no more than an *oblast*. The notion of an autonomous republic as a government without sovereignty is judicial and political nonsense.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ When the 19th CPSU All-Union Conference voted to separate Communist party functions from the state administration on 28 June 1988, there were no freely contested multiparty elections. In fact, the March 1989 elections to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies were not multiparty elections. Gail W. Lapidus, 'From Democratisation to Disintegration: The Impact of Perestroika on the National Question', in *From Union to Commonwealth: Nationalism and Separatism in the Soviet Republics*, eds. Gail W. Lapidus, *et. al.*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp.59-63.

⁸⁶ Nail M. Mukhiamov, 'Khronika politicheskogo protsessa (1988-1998)', in *Regiony Rossii: Khronika i rukovaditeli. Tom.7*, ed. Kimitaka Matsuzato, Sapporo, Japan: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, 2000, pp.24-25.

⁸⁷ Elizabeth Teague, 'Center-Periphery Relations in the Russian Federation', in *National Identity and Ethnicity in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, ed. Roman Szporluk, Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1994, p.31.

The TASSR's position was strengthened on 26 April 1990 with the adoption of the law 'On the Delineation of Powers between the USSR and the Subjects of the Federation', which declared that

The autonomous republics are Soviet socialist states that are members of the USSR federation. Autonomous republics and autonomous formations are a part of union republics on the basis of the free self-determination of peoples, and they possess all state power on their territory, with the exception of the powers they have transferred to the jurisdiction of the USSR and union republics.⁸⁹

Pleasing the Tatar leaders, article 4 asserted that 'in the field of economic, social, and cultural construction on its territory, an autonomous republic has the same rights as a union republic, with the exception of those that, by mutual agreement, are assigned to the union republic's jurisdiction'.⁹⁰

The RSFSR was also trying to maximise its own autonomy from the Soviet centre in Moscow. Russian sovereignty came at the first Congress of People's Deputies (CPD) of the RSFSR, which adopted the Declaration of the State Sovereignty of the RSFSR on 12 June 1990. The declaration's preamble asserted that it expressed the will of the 'peoples' of the RSFSR, not of 'the Russian people'; Article 1 stated that the RSFSR was 'a sovereign state created by the peoples united within it'; Article 3 asserted that the 'RSFSR's multiethnic people are the repository of sovereignty and are the source of state power'; and Article 4 stated that the RSFSR's sovereignty was being proclaimed in order to guarantee the right of 'every people to self-determination in their chosen national-state and national cultural form'.⁹¹ At the same time, it went on to assert the supremacy of the RSFSR constitution and laws on RSFSR territory over those of the USSR. Following the declaration of sovereignty, the RSFSR created its own Communist Party, KGB and Academy of Sciences in 1990.

⁸⁸ Rafael S. Khakimov, 'Avtonomnaia respublika-politicheskii anakhronizm?', *Komsomolets Tatarii*, 10 September 1989.

⁸⁹ *Izvestiia*, 3 May 1990.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ 'Declaration of the State Sovereignty of the RSFSR', in *Perestroika in the Soviet Republics: Documents on the National Question*, eds. Charles F. Furtado, Jr. and Andrea Chandler, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992, pp.325-326.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn formulated a nation-building strategy reflecting an ethnic nationalist position three months after the Russian Republic declared its sovereignty. In his programmatic brochure, *Kak nam obustroit' Rossiiu* (How Shall We Reconstitute Russia), Solzhenitsyn contended that the Soviet Union had no future as a single state, and could be held together only at the cost of enormous bloodshed. 'We have to choose firmly', Solzhenitsyn declared, 'between an empire that first of all destroys us and the spiritual and bodily salvation of our people'. Solzhenitsyn favoured redrawing some of those boundaries if that should prove to be the will of the populace, as expressed through plebiscites.⁹² He hoped that in such a plebiscite, Northern Kazakhstan, Eastern Ukraine and Belarus would vote to form the Russian Union (*rossiiskii soiuz*). According to his strategy, although non-Russian minorities on the Russian border, like the Chechens in the North Caucasus, might secede, those minorities encircled by Russian territories, such as the Tatars in the Middle Volga, had to share the fate of the Russian people, with maximum autonomy.⁹³

The Tatar leaders perceived Solzhenitsyn's definition of Russianness and the fact that the RSFSR's Declaration of State Sovereignty said nothing about a special status for the TASSR as manifestations of Russian chauvinism. El'tsin, who was careful in maintaining good relations with the Tatars in his intensifying struggle with Gorbachev, made his famous statement urging the autonomous republics 'to take as much sovereignty as they can swallow' in Kazan on 5 August 1990.⁹⁴

Relying on El'tsin's promise of greater autonomy for the TASSR, the Tatar and Russian ethnic communities in the Republic publicised their drafts of the sovereignty declaration.⁹⁵ A compromise was reached between the Tatar and Russian drafts when the

⁹² Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, *Kak nam obustroit' Rossiiu. Posil'nye soobrazheniia*, Moscow: Patriot, 1991, pp.5-6.

⁹³ Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, *The Russian Question at the End of the Twentieth Century*. London: Harvill. 1995, pp.99-104.

⁹⁴ Aleksandr Mineev, 'Boris El'tsin "Berite stol'ko samostoiatel'nosti, skol'ko sumeete obespechit"', *Moskovskie novosti*, 19 August 1990. For a stilted translation of El'tsin's statement into Tatar, suggesting that he advocated the independence of Tatars, see D. Asylov, 'Boris El'tsin Mostekyil' iasheiacheksez', *Sotsialistik Tatarstan*, 8 August 1990. In this interview, El'tsin was reported as saying that 'We will welcome whatever independence the TASSR chooses for itself.... if you want to govern yourselves completely, go ahead'.

⁹⁵ The Tatar draft was prepared by the TOTs and the Russian draft was prepared by the Citizen's Committee of Tataria (*Grazhdanskii Komitet Tatarii*). For these drafts, see *Sovetskaia Tataria*, 8 August 1990.

Supreme Soviet of the TASSR issued the formal sovereignty declaration on 30 August 1990 (the full text of the TASSR's declaration of sovereignty is available in Appendix 1.1). The preamble of the declaration stated that the declaration was based on 'the inherent rights of Tatars, and of the whole population of the Republic to self-determination'.⁹⁶ By leaving out the term 'autonomous republic' the declaration implied that it was a union republic. Article 2 stated that 'the land, its natural resources and other resources on the territory of the Tatar SSR shall be the exclusive property of the Tatar people'. Article 3 identified both Tatar and Russian as the Republic's state languages, and guaranteed to all residents equal treatment under the law regardless of nationality, social origin, religion, and political beliefs. It made no mention of Tatarstan being a constituent unit of the RSFSR. Rather, the declaration was to serve as the basis for a new constitution, a 'Union Treaty' with the USSR, and for 'treaties with the RSFSR and other republics. It also asserted that Tatarstan's constitution and the laws of the Republic were 'supreme' on the territory of the Republic.'⁹⁷

The RSFSR legislature rejected Tatarstan's unilateral declaration for changing its status.⁹⁸ Tatar nationalists responded by radical demonstrations. Similarly, some ethnic Russians started to discuss the plans to establish a 'Zakamsk Republic' in the Russian-dominated areas around Naberezhnye Chelny and Nizhnekamsk that would separate from Tatarstan and join the RSFSR, if Kazan pressed to secede from the RSFSR.⁹⁹

Two weeks after the Tatar declaration of sovereignty, Shaimiev announced plans for the formation of an independent (*samostoiatel'naia*) Tatar Communist Party. Shaimiev's resignation from the First Secretary position in the Tatar Oblast of the CPSU, indicated not only that the Party was becoming increasingly marginalized but also that Shaimiev did not want to be subjected to Moscow's Party discipline. Moreover, Shaimiev encouraged the formation of the Communist Party of the Republic of Tatarstan on 12

⁹⁶ 'Deklaratsiia o gosudarstvennom suverenitete TSSR', in *Belaia kniga Tatarstana. Put' k suverenitetu 1990-1995 (Sbornik dokumentov)*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1995, p.5.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Tatarstan was not the first Autonomous Republic to declare sovereignty. The following republics declared themselves sovereign earlier than Tatarstan: North Ossetiia (20 July 1990), Kareliia (9 August 1990) and Komi (29 August 1990).

⁹⁹ *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 31 October 1990.

December 1990. Besides, the TOTs formed a youth organisation, *Suverenitet* (Sovereignty) as a grass-roots movement in support of the sovereignty of Tatarstan.¹⁰⁰

To counter-balance the centrifugal pressures, Gorbachev started to re-centralise political power by strengthening the Presidency. He also announced a USSR-wide referendum for 17 March 1991 on the preservation of the USSR 'as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics, in which human rights and the freedom of people of all nationalities will be fully guaranteed'.¹⁰¹ In turn, the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, with El'tsin as its Chairperson, announced that voters in Russia would be asked whether they approved the establishment of an elected Russian President. Tatarstan announced that it would not include the question about the Russian Presidency on the ballot. The outcome of the 17 March 1991 referendum made it clear that voters in the TASSR considered the USSR government an ally in their campaign for greater autonomy, as 87.5 percent of those voting in the Republic supported the preservation of the USSR, well above the 71.3 percent in the RSFSR as a whole.¹⁰² Only Kalmykia, North Ossetia and Tyva votes were higher than the votes in Tatarstan (See Table A3.2).¹⁰³

As 12 June 1991 was proposed as the date for electing the Russian President, *Ittifak* activists, including its leader Fauziia Bairamova, began a hunger strike, and demanded elections for the Tatar Presidency. Tatarstan's Supreme Soviet announced that Tatarstan would hold elections for its own Presidency on 12 June 1991. It also announced that the Republic's government would not facilitate the RSFSR Presidential elections, although neither would it try to prevent them from being held in Tatarstan. Elections were held as planned both in Russia and Tatarstan on 12 June 1991. Only 36.59 percent of eligible voters in Tatarstan took part for the RSFSR Presidential elections, however, of whom only 44.97 percent voted for El'tsin, while Ryzhkov got 16.68 percent of the votes (The Russia-wide votes of El'tsin and Ryzhkov were 58.56 and 17.22 percent respectively. See Table A3.3). In contrast, 63.4 of the eligible voters participated in Tatarstan's Presidential

¹⁰⁰ 'Programma zashchity realizatsii gosudarstvennogo suvereniteta Tatarstana', *Panorama*, no.5, 1991, pp.9-18.

¹⁰¹ Ann Sheehy, 'The USSR All Union and the RSFSR Referendums of March 17', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 29 March 1991, p.22.

¹⁰² For a position against maintaining the unity of the USSR, see Fauziia A. Bairamova, 'Bez ni ochen karshy?', *Sotsialistik Tatarstan*, 6 March 1991.

¹⁰³ *Pravda*, 27 March 1991.

elections, with Shaimiev, the only candidate, winning with 70.6 percent of the votes (See Table A3.4).¹⁰⁴

In July 1991, Shaimiev appointed a delegation headed by Vice-President Vasilii Likhachev to represent Tatarstan at the Union Treaty talks and to begin discussions over a separate treaty with the RSFSR. The prominent members of the Tatar delegation were Rafael Khakimov, the Chief Advisor to Shaimiev, and Indus Tagirov, Dean of the History Faculty in Kazan University. The Russian delegation included the Head of the Presidential Administration Gennadii Burbulis, and El'tsin's advisors, Sergei Shakhrai and Oleg Lobov. The delegations met in Moscow for the first time on 12-15 August 1991. The parties signed a protocol, which stated that the delegations had agreed 'to establish relations on the basis of treaty-forms of regulation, taking into consideration their key interests but without infringing on the interests of other republics and the Union as a whole'. It also recognised the desire of the RSFSR and of Tatarstan, as participants in the New Union Treaty, to renew and raise their status'.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, an agreement was reached on the draft of the New Union Treaty (*Soiuznyi dogovor*), which was to create a confederal form of state.¹⁰⁶ This treaty was too late and too little to please all parties concerned at once, and the Law on Secession made any concession to the secessionists almost impossible.

The Soviet military and the KGB were very dissatisfied with the draft of the New Union Treaty. To prevent the signing of the Treaty, the State Committee for the Extraordinary Situation (GKChP) assumed power between 19 and 21 August 1991. The failure of this attempted coup greatly strengthened El'tsin and the RSFSR government. When El'tsin banned the CPSU in the aftermath of the coup, the Soviet power lost its main instrument of controlling the people. Peter J. S. Duncan explained this process as follows:

the USSR was created by the Communist Party, out of the ruins of the Russian Empire, and was held together only by totalitarian communist means. The

¹⁰⁴ *Izvestiia*, 13 June 1991.

¹⁰⁵ *Belaia kniga Tatarstana. Put' k suverenitetu 1990-1995 (Sbornik dokumentov)*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1995, pp.18-19.

¹⁰⁶ Andrei B. Zubov and Aleksei M. Salmin, 'Soiuznyi dogovor i mekhanizm vyrabotki novogo natsional'no-gosudarstvennogo ustroistva SSSR', *Politicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.2, no.1, 1991, p.43.

decline of the CPSU and the removal of its 'leading role' in March 1990 made the collapse of the Union inescapable.¹⁰⁷

In this respect, the Coup of August 1991 could be seen as something that simply hastened the inevitable.

Post-Coup Politics: Checheno-Ingushetiia and Tatarstan Compared

In the post-Coup period, El'tsin's relations with the non-Russian leaders who supported the coup (especially the Tatar and the Checheno-Ingush leaders) deteriorated further. During the coup, both Checheno-Ingush leader Doku Zavgayev and Tatar leader Shaimiev were in Moscow. Zavgayev supported the coup leaders in the hope of Moscow's help in disarming the Chechen ethnic nationalists. Similarly, Shaimiev flew to Moscow and met with Gennadii Ianaev, one of the coup leaders. In his radio address, Shaimiev stated that the reasons for the coup were justified and that decrees by El'tsin and the RSFSR government had no legal status in Tatarstan.¹⁰⁸

Despite Tatarstan and Checheno-Ingushetiia's initial common position against Moscow in declaring state sovereignty and calling for a Union Republic status in 1990, and the common position of the Tatars and the Chechens vis-à-vis the Russians in terms of their religious orientations (Islam for the Tatars and the Chechens and Orthodox Christianity for the Russians), they followed different paths after the August coup: While Chechnia sought to achieve outright independence, Tatarstan wanted to obtain a special status in the Russian Federation. Although Chechnia's international border with Georgia might have led the Chechens to demand independence, and Tatarstan's location in the heart of the Russian Federation made the independence option unrealistic, their differences seem to lie in the variation of institutional and socio-cultural contexts that influenced the

¹⁰⁷ Peter J. S. Duncan, 'The Nationality Factor in Soviet Stability: Western Scholarship Revisited', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, vol.74, no.2, 1996, p.260.

¹⁰⁸ Rafael S. Khakimov, 'Vopros o pozitsii Prezidenta Shaimieva vo vremia perevorota, *Vecherniaia Kazan*, 23 August 1991, and Rafael S. Khakimov, 'Uroki strannogo putscha', *Komsomolets Tatarstana*, 27 September 1991.

leaderships of these republics.¹⁰⁹ Anatol Lieven gave a clear explanation of their difference as follows:

The key difference between Tatarstan and Chechnya since 1990 has obviously been that in 1991 Chechnya experienced a national revolution which overthrew the local institutions of the Soviet state, and Tatarstan did not. The Tatar Communist Party First Secretary, Mintimer Shaimiyev, stayed in power, defeated the radical nationalist opposition by a mixture of coercion and cooptation, and transformed the regional Communist Party into a moderate, statist national party under his absolute control.¹¹⁰

The Chechen national revolution against Moscow's institutional instruments of imperial control in Checheno-Ingushetiia, which forms the key difference between these two republics, erupted in a very short span of time. The main reason for the outbreak of the revolution was the weakening of the institutional control mechanisms of Moscow over Checheno-Ingushetiia. When the coup failed, Moscow lost two of its instruments in the Republic: the local branch of the CPSU, which was banned by El'tsin, and the local branch of the KGB. In fact, the revolution started when Dzhokhar Dudaev, Chairperson of the National Congress of the Chechen Nation (OKChN), demanded on 22 August 1991 that all branches of State power should resign due to their support for the coup.¹¹¹ Following the refusal of the Supreme Soviet to obey this call, Dudaev's 15,000 active supporters overthrew the local branch of the CPSU, which was headed by Zavgaev, on 6 September 1991. Moreover, the OKChN's forces stormed the local KGB offices. With the participation of two hundred prisoners released from the local prison, the OKChN's National Guard took effective control of Grozny on 10 October 1991.¹¹² The Presidential elections were held as quickly as possible so as not to give Moscow the chance to organise a counter-revolution. The elections, for which the turn out was 77 percent, were held on 27 October 1991 under the strict control of pro-Dudaev forces. According to the election results, Dudaev, the only candidate, was voted for President by 85 percent of the

¹⁰⁹ Gulnaz Sharafutdinova, 'Chechnya Versus Tatarstan', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.47, no.2, 2000, pp.13-23.

¹¹⁰ Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, p.77.

¹¹¹ Marie Bennigsen-Broxup, 'After the Putsch, 1991', in *The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance towards the Muslim World*, ed. Marie Bennigsen Broxup, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992, p.221.

¹¹² Fleming Spirdsboel-Hanson, 'The 1991 Chechen Revolution: The Response of Moscow', *Central Asian Survey*, vol.13, no.3, 1994, pp.396-402.

total 490,000 votes. Strengthened by this election, the Interim Supreme Soviet declared Chechen independence on 1 November 1991.¹¹³

The weakness of the pro-Moscow Chechen leadership played another important role in the outbreak of the Chechen revolution. The Chechen leadership lacked a local power base to counter the uprising of the Chechen nationalists. In fact, since the persecution of a significant part of the Chechen elite during the 1944 deportations, non-Chechen -mainly Russian- administrators had run the Republic. Doku Zavgaev who replaced Vladimir Fotaev, an ethnic Russian Communist Party First Secretary of the Republic, in June 1989, was the first Chechen President.¹¹⁴ As a pro-Moscow administrator, Zavgaev did his best in showing his loyalty to Moscow, instead of establishing his own authority in Chechen society. Moreover, pro-Moscow Chechens lacked a party of their own, and were scattered over various so-called informal organisations, such as the Union for the Assistance of Perestroika and the Popular Front of Checheno-Ingushetia.¹¹⁵

In examining the Chechen revolution, the strength of Chechen nationalist mobilisation should also be taken into account, since the weakening of ties between Moscow and Grozny, and the weakness of Zavgaev leadership alone might not have necessarily led to the Chechen revolution. The Chechens had a strong historical experience and ideology of anti-colonial resistance, which goes back to the times of Sheikh Shamil. The first Chechen resistance to Russian rule was organised by Shamil between 1824 and 1859. The *abreks* and Sufi orders played a crucial role in organising attacks on the colonising Russians.¹¹⁶ In the post-Soviet era, the *Vainakh Democratic Party*, which was established by Zelimkhan Iandarbiev in February 1990, served to mobilise the Chechens, as it provided Chechens with an organisational infrastructure to establish networks inside and outside the Republic.¹¹⁷ Although the Sufi orders recruited people for the resistance

¹¹³ Rieks H. J. Smeets and Egbert G. C. Wesselink, *Chechenya [sic]: One Year of War - A Pax Christi International Report in Collaboration with the Caucasus Foundation*, Brussels: Pax Christi International, 1995, p.27.

¹¹⁴ Timur M. Muzaev, *Chechenskaia Respublika. Organy, vlasti i politicheskie sili*, Moscow: Panorama, 1995, pp.158-159.

¹¹⁵ John B. Dunlop, *Russia Confronts Chechnya: Roots of Separatist Conflict*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp.88-89.

¹¹⁶ *Abreks* were outlaws attacking the Russian officials and the Chechens who collaborated with the Russian authorities during the final years of the Russian Empire.

¹¹⁷ Vadim E. Korotkov, 'Chechenskaia model' etnopoliticheskikh protsessov', *Obshchestvennye nauki i sovremennost'*, no.3, 1994, p.105.

movement, they also fed Islamic radicalism, which prevented the Chechens from forming a united and democratic Chechen independence movement in the post-Soviet era.¹¹⁸

In contrast to Checheno-Ingushetiia, Tatarstan saw no revolution in the aftermath of the August Coup. Unlike the Zavgaev leadership, the Shaimiev leadership succeeded in co-opting the Tatar nationalists. The main reason for this is the strength of the institutional control mechanisms of Moscow over Tatarstan. In fact, the local branch of the CPSU transformed itself simply into the Communist Party of Tatarstan, without Shaimiev as its leader. Moreover, the Tatar nationalists did not target the local branch of the KGB physically. Even when 5,000 members of Tatar nationalist organisations demanded that the Supreme Soviet of Tatarstan should adopt a declaration of full independence on 13 October 1991, their clashes with the security forces left only six demonstrators and five militiamen in the hospital.¹¹⁹ Consequently, the Tatar nationalists were unable to use the violent method of overthrowing the local representatives of the Soviet power, and cutting Moscow's ties with Tatarstan.

Moreover, compared to the weak pro-Moscow Chechen leadership, Tatarstan's authorities were powerful enough to prevent such a revolutionary change from taking place in their Republic. Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism*, which will be explored in the following chapter, enabled him to prevent the division of the Republican leadership into hostile camps. Shaimiev sought to ameliorate tensions by accommodating both the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan. While he was pressurising Tatarstan's Supreme Soviet into declaring that 15 October (when Ivan IV captured Kazan in 1552) would no longer be a republic holiday or otherwise officially celebrated, he also refrained from backing the decision of the same Supreme Soviet to declare State Independence (*nezavisimost'*) of the Republic on 24 October 1991.¹²⁰ Tatarstan's leadership even refrained from changing the name of Tatarstan's secret police (Committee of State Security –KGB), which was changed at the federal level from KGB to FSK (Federal Counterintelligence Service).

¹¹⁸ On the destabilising role of radical Islam in post-Soviet Chechnia see Anatol Lieven, 'Russia-U.S. vs. Khattab?', *Moscow Times*, 24 September 1999.

¹¹⁹ *Pravda*, 17 October 1991.

Another factor that differentiates the Tatar case from the Chechen case, where there was a highly united nationalist movement, was the division of the Tatar ethnic nationalist movement into various factions, such as the TOTs, *Suverenitet* and *Ittifak*. For example, moderate Tatar nationalists refused to attend the founding conference of the National Assembly (*Milli Mejlis*), which aimed to unite all Tatars for their calls for Tatar independence under the leadership of Talgat Abdullin on 1 February 1992. This showed the seriousness of the divisions within the nationalist camp.¹²¹ Moreover, the lack of interest in a movement for outright Tatar independence can also be linked to the changes in Tatar society during four centuries of Russian rule as compared to the two centuries of Russian rule over the Chechens. In this process, the Tatars closely resembled the Russians in social and cultural terms. Moreover, the reformist *Jadid* movement rendered Islam capable of surviving in a modern world and created a new political platform, from which they could voice their aspirations in the context of the Russian politics.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to examine the historical sources of elite level pragmatism in Tataria. The Tatar elites have long played the mediating role for containing Tatar nationalism under both the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. The ability of the co-opted Tatar elites to perform their mediating functions depended on two conditions: demobilisation of Tatar society and some degree of hierarchical discipline between Moscow and the Tatar elites. The periodical disappearance of these two conditions increased the manoeuvring room of the Tatar elites. The Tatarisation of administration in Tataria made possible the penetration of a pragmatic form of nationalism into local elites. Therefore, the Tatar elites, who were ostensibly recruited to mediate the Russian imperial domination over Tatar society, sometimes defended their own personal interests, as if they were defending the interests of the Tatar nation, before Moscow.

Under the Tsarist rule, the majority of Tatar elites were co-opted. When Moscow was strong, the co-opted Tatar elites were submissive. From the time of Ivan Grozny up until

¹²⁰ Bess Brown, 'Tatarstan Adopts Independence Resolution', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 24 October 1991.

¹²¹ Artem Karaperian, 'Tatarstan: Chechenskii sindrom', *Moskovskie novosti*, 19 January 1992.

the rule of Catherine II, Moscow tried to gain the allegiance of the Tatar nobility through granting privileges to compliant Tatar elites and through purging the non-compliant ones. The forced conversions to Orthodox Christianity and punitive economic measures were applied to the non-compliant Tatar elites. Partly due to these policies, the Tatar elites lost their unity, and became unable to organise a successful independence movement. Consequently, the Tatar elites became interested not in independence, but in institutional reform. In fact, the reformist atmosphere under Catherine II and in the aftermath of 1905 revolution led to calls for equal treatment for the Tatars, rather than a fully-fledged independence-minded Tatar nationalist movement.

In the Soviet era, instead of organised Tatar nationalism, the sublimated form of Tatar national communism has often been able to play a role in Soviet federal politics. Dissatisfied with the administrative status of Tataria as an Autonomous Republic, which was lower on the federal hierarchy of the Soviet Union, the Tatar communist elites frequently pressed for a Union Republic status, which was a higher administrative status. The link between the status of Tataria within the institutional fabric of the Soviet Union and Tatar national communism was established by the Soviet system of 'ethnic federalism', which granted Tatars some, but not all, of the 'privileges' given to the elites of the Union Republics.

Because of these considerations, the Tatars asked twice for upgrading to the status of a Union Republic during the discussions for new Soviet constitutions under Stalin in 1936 and under Brezhnev in 1977. This first wave of penetration of Tatar communists into Republican institutions of Tataria provided the social basis for much of the resistance to Stalin's policies. These Tatar elites were labelled as 'national communists', since they conceived themselves both communist and nationally conscious. They combined the loyalty to the USSR with an attempt to defend Tatar interests. Nevertheless, Stalin responded very harshly to this wave of Tatar national communism when he executed several of these Tatar leaders for their national communism.

A second wave of penetration of Tatar national communism into Tataria's institutions occurred in the post-Stalin era before the discussions for new Soviet constitution under Brezhnev in 1977. In line with the Brezhnevite approach, the post-Stalin Tatar leaders

were bought off with more central investment in Tataria. Moscow tolerated the flourishing of local patronage networks in exchange for the denationalization of politics in Tataria. The soft type of national communism among the Tatar elites could explain Moscow's soft approach to Tataria. Moreover, although this approach led to corruption and gradual undermining of discipline from within Tataria, it was effective in preventing the formation of a populist nationalist movement against Moscow.

On the eve of the disintegration of the Soviet Union under Gorbachev, Mintimer Shaimiev opened the latest episode in the relations between Kazan and Moscow. The strategy of the Tatar leadership under Shaimiev for enhancing Tataria's autonomy was again to claim the Union Republic status for the Tatars. The main flaw in this strategy lay in the fact that its success required the survival of the USSR, albeit in a reformed form. Consequently, the disintegration of the Soviet Union eliminated the remaining possibilities, if any, for the success of this strategy. With the CPSU banned after the August coup, and the communist ideology discredited, both the Tatar and the Russian leaders had to invent new policies for coping with the uncertainties of the post-Soviet world.

The next chapter will discuss the post-Soviet Tatar leadership's pragmatic use of nationalism to consolidate its position in the changing conditions of post-Soviet world, which left Moscow and the nationalist groups in Tatarstan without reliable instruments of making the Tatar leadership accountable for its policies.

2. Shaimiev's Politics of Tatar Nationalism: A Strategy of Political Survival

This chapter seeks to explore Shaimiev's politics of nationalism and its role in the functioning of the political regime in post-Soviet Tatarstan. Tatarstan's post-Soviet politics of nationalism has been discussed in normative terms, which served to label Tatarstan's politics of nationalism as 'good' or 'bad'. Some scholars, such as Valerii Tishkov, have criticised Tatarstan's post-Soviet drive for greater sovereignty as being a form of ethnic nationalism, while some others, including Rafael Khakimov, have glorified it as a form of civic nationalism. I think, both of these positions are flawed since they are based on normative rather than objective analysis of the situation in Tatarstan.

Valerii Tishkov in his book, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union* (1997), described the policies of Tatarstan's leadership as ethnic nationalism, since it advanced the ethnic interests of the Tatars.

The most striking example is the Republic of Tatarstan. Here the ruling elite employed Tatar ethnonationalism, radically expressed by ultra-nationalist organisations and local intellectuals, to establish a firm and indisputable political order based on titular representation... Other republics were carefully watching this dispute. Regional leaders soon learned that challenging the centre could be much more impressive and legitimate when framed in the language of ethnonational demands.¹

In this analysis, Tishkov ignores the desire of Tatarstan's leadership to distance itself from Tatar ethnic nationalists. In fact, Tatarstan's leadership viewed Tatar ethnic nationalism as a source of instability that might sabotage Tatarstan's relations with Moscow and the ethnic Russians in the Republic.

Drawing a completely different picture of Tatarstan, Rafael Khakimov, Chief Advisor of Shaimiev and the Director of the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences of the

¹ Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, (hereafter, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict*), London: Sage, 1997, p.242.

Republic of Tatarstan, has argued that the official version of Tatar nationalism actively promotes civic rather than ethnic Tatar nationalism.² However, Khakimov ignores the fact that the Tatars and ethnic Russians were prevented from getting organised freely to promote their own interests, since any kind of substantial resistance to Shaimiev's rule could easily be suppressed in the name of regional stability. Although the Shaimiev leadership claimed to promote the interests of both communities, in reality, it only promoted the interests of Tatarstan's mainly ethnic Tatar nomenklatura.

The chapter argues that Shaimiev's politics of nationalism can be described as a type of *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism*, which justifies the search of Tatarstan's leadership for national autonomy in terms of the need for interethnic stability in Tatarstan. To maintain its political power and gain economic wealth under the conditions of uncertainty emanating from Moscow's post-Soviet 'transition' process and the activism of local nationalist movements, Tatarstan's leadership relied on the institutional heritage of the formerly communist Republican state structure, and its ideology of multinationalism. Although the discourse of multinationality presented the Tatar identity to the Russians and Russian-speakers in Tatarstan as a pluralist, civic and non-ethnic one, in reality, Shaimiev's policies resulted in the Tatarisation of the administration, economy and legislature. Besides, Tatarstan's leadership used patronage networks and the rigged elections in order to secure survival of its rule against potential competitors.

The chapter initially identifies the significance of nationalism for the political survival of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership. Afterwards, Shaimiev's discourse of nationalism will be explored in order to identify whether it is a civic, ethnic or pragmatic form of nationalism. Next, Tatarstan's policies of nation-building will be analysed by looking at Tatarstan's policies in the fields of language, education, culture and religion. The chapter will also examine the impact of Shaimiev's version of Tatar nationalism on Tatarstan's employment and economic policies. Furthermore, the chapter will examine the absence of a Russian backlash by looking at both patronage networks and electoral engineering in Tatarstan. In the final section, Tatarstan's politics of nationalism will be compared to the

² Rafael S. Khakimov, 'Prospects of Federalism in Russia: A View from Tatarstan', *Security Dialogue*, vol.27, no 1, 1996, p.71.

politics of nationalism in the Bashkortostan and Chuvashiia republics of the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

Mintimer Shaimiev and the Post-Soviet Politics of Survival

The process of post-Soviet transition in Tatarstan has potentially endangered the ruling position of Tatarstan's leadership, because it could divide them into competing camps over the choice of the strategy of transition in the short-term. Moreover, the declared objective of introducing a free market economy and liberal democracy would make the politics in Tatarstan a lot more competitive and accountable to the citizens in the long-term.³ In order to cope with these short- and long-term challenges, Tatarstan's leadership has kept outsiders out of the political competition by sticking together.

In achieving mutual understanding and co-operation among themselves, the members of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership have benefited from the prior historical development of the Republic, as they have similar backgrounds in the TASSR's Supreme Soviet, Council of Ministers and the Tatar Obkom of the CPSU. The *nomenklatura* background of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership could be identified by looking at the personal biographies of the leading figures of post-Soviet Tatarstan leadership. The President of the Republic, Mintimer Shaimiev, has a clear *nomenklatura* background. Shaimiev, who was born in the TASSR's predominantly Tatar village of Aniakovo on 20 January 1937, graduated from Kazan Agricultural Institute in 1959, and joined the Communist Party in 1963. Six years later, Shaimiev was appointed as the Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources of the TASSR. After serving as the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers of the TASSR between 1985-1989, Shaimiev became the First Secretary of the Tatar Obkom of CPSU in 1989. In addition to his Chairpersonship of the political organ of the TASSR, the Obkom, he also became the Chairperson of the legislative organ of the

³ James Hughes, 'Sub-National Elites and Post-Communist Transformation in Russia: A Reply To Kryshchanovskaya & White', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.49, no.6, 1997, pp.1017-1018.

Republic, the Supreme Soviet, in 1990. He consolidated his position in the Republic when he became the President of Tatarstan in June 1991.⁴

Shaimiev's personality could be a guide to his approach towards post-Soviet transition. His name 'Mintimer' comes from 'Mingle Timer' meaning 'a child who is as strong as iron'. However, his pragmatic personality is not compatible with the meaning of his name. R. Mustafin and A. Khasanov described Shaimiev's personality as follows:

He can, at first glance, seem a sluggish and phlegmatic person, yet he is in fact, rather mobile and dynamic by nature. ... If the solution is clear and there are no objections, he expatiates it immediately. But if a situation is tangled and the decision is far from obvious, he never rushes it.⁵

Shaimiev's conception of politics represented the mindset of a Communist regional leader in that Shaimiev views politics as a technical issue of managing regional affairs. In this sense, he favours the depoliticisation of politics in Tatarstan. Shaimiev describes his political style as a manager rather than a politician:

Nowadays, it is hard to separate politics from the economy. Any economic issue, especially when ignored, becomes a political one. Therefore, in order to be a good politician, it is very desirable to be a fairly good manager as well. That kind of synthesis leads to success. I keep an eye on the new politicians who have come to power recently. They have it all: a particularly impressive appearance, oratorical skill, and the experience of a mentor. They only lack one thing: real-life experience. All the rest pales by comparison.⁶

In line with his apolitical approach to the political problems of Tatarstan, Shaimiev adopted a conservative position in the face of growing calls for changes. Mustafin and Khasanov described Shaimiev's conservative personal style as follows:

As far as his character goes, he is not a revolutionary, but rather a rational conservative. He never seeks changes for their own sake. He holds to the old, whilst it is viable and has considerable use. His main political principle is similar to that of a physician: 'do not cause harm'. Any changes, in his judgement are necessary only when the time is ripe for them.⁷

⁴ Nail M. Mukhariaimov, 'Politicheskaiia elita Tatarstana: Biograficheskie svedeniia', in *Regiony Rossii: Khronika i rukovoditeli. Tom.7*, ed. Kimitaka Matsuzato, Sapporo, Japan: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, 2000, p.119.

⁵ R. A. Mustafin and A. Ch. Khasanov, *Pervyi prezident Tatarstana: Mintimer Shaimiev*, (hereafter, *Pervyi prezident Tatarstana*), Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1995, p.75.

⁶ Aleksandr Kuteinitsyn and Viktor Churilov, 'Interv'iu s M. Sh. Shaimievom', *Delovaia zhizn'*, nos. 11-12, 1992, p.6.

It should added here that although Shaimiev has maintained his cautious political style, he has shown a remarkable performance in adopting his position to the changing conditions of the post-Soviet world very skilfully.⁸

Apart from Shaimiev's personality, his authoritarian policies also prevented Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership from being divided into two centres of power around the parliament and the executive, as close associates of Shaimiev headed both of them. Prime Minister Mukhammat Sabirov headed the executive organ of the Republic, the Council of Ministers. Sabirov was born on 29 March 1932 in the village of Novo-Kurmanovo in Bashkortostan. After his graduation from the Institute of Oil in Ufa in 1955, Sabirov joined the Communist Party in 1958, and served as Deputy Chair of the Tatar Council of Ministers between 1983 and 1991. Farid Mukhametshin headed the legislature organ of the Republic, the Supreme Soviet (renamed as the State Council in 1995). Mukhametshin was born on 22 May 1949 in the city of Al'metievsk in Tatarstan. Just like Sabirov, Mukhametshin joined the Communist Party in 1970 following his graduation from the Institute of Oil in Ufa in 1959. His political career started in the city of Al'metievsk. He served as the Minister for Trade in the Council of Ministers of the TASSR between 1989 and 1991. In addition to his position as the Deputy Chair of the Council of Ministers, Mukhametshin also became the Chairperson of Tatarstan's Supreme Soviet in 1991.⁹

In order not to alienate the interests of ethnic Russians, Shaimiev needed to have at least one ethnic Russian at the top-level leadership of Tatarstan. In 1991, the highest-ranking ethnic Russian politician in Tatarstan was Vasilii Likhachev, the Vice-President of the Republic. Likhachev, who is married to a Tatar, was born in 1952 in Gorkii (renamed as Nizhnii Novgorod in the post-Soviet era). After graduating from the Law Faculty of Kazan State University in 1975, he became an academician, and taught at Universities in Guinea Bissau (1982-1983) and Madagascar (1987-1988). As a deputy in the Supreme Soviet of the TASSR, Likhachev worked closely with Shaimiev in formulating the legal basis of Tatarstan's sovereignty. As Vice-President, Likhachev was given the task of promoting Tatarstan's international links in June 1991.¹⁰

⁷ Mustafin and Khasanov, *Pervyi prezident Tatarstana*, p.75.

⁸ Lev Ovrutskii, *Shaimiev – Real'nyi i virtual'nyi*, Kazan and Ioshkar-Ola: Maxim, 2000.

⁹ Evgenii A. Lisin, *et.al.*, *Kto est' kto v Respublike Tatarstan*, Kazan: Star, 1996, pp.5-9.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

In his study on the backgrounds of the members of Tatarstan's Council of Ministers, Midkhat Farukshin established that Tatarstan's leadership was predominantly composed of ethnic Tatars and the former nomenklatura of the Republic. In 1992, 78 percent of Tatarstan's leadership had an ethnic Tatar background, while 68 percent of them were active in the leading positions in the TASSR and the Tatar Obkom of the Communist Party. According to Farukshin, twenty-six of the thirty ministers in Tatarstan's post-Soviet government were Tatar. These ministers came from nomenklatura backgrounds with seventeen of them having official party careers. While six of the thirty ministers were in the governing posts of the Republic since 1985 or earlier, the rest had moved up from ministries and local party organs. Two of them had been rectors of higher education institutes. Only one of the ministers (the minister of health) had moved up into the leadership of Tatarstan from a non-governmental background. Most of them made their careers in the Republic, with only two of them being born outside Tatarstan. Except for one of them, all members of Tatarstan's Council of Ministers had received their higher education in Tatarstan. They graduated mainly from the Faculty of Law and the Institutes of Agriculture and Economics in Tatarstan. The majority of them were born during the late-1930s, when Stalin completed his purge of the Tatar national communists that challenged Moscow's rule in the TASSR. In terms of gender, with the exception of one female member, all members of Tatarstan's Council of Ministers were male.¹¹

Farukshin's findings were confirmed by Rashid Akhmetov's study on the ethnic composition of Tatarstan's urban workforce in 1992. Akhmetov identified that the employment rate of the Tatars in the public sector was higher than the Russians. Akhmetov also demonstrated that among the urban employees in 1992, the Russians were employed mainly in the technical fields of infrastructure, engineering and education, whereas the Tatars were employed predominantly in the fields of government, public services, literature and arts (See Table A4.5).¹²

¹¹ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Politicheskaya elita v Tatarstane: Vyzovy vremeni i trudnosti adaptatsii', *Politicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.5, no.6, 1994, p.69.

¹² Rashid Akhmetov, 'Elita Tatar. K postanovke problemy', in *Sovremennye natsional'nye protsessy v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Damir M. Iskhakov and Rozalina N. Musina, Kazan: IILII KNTs RAN, 1992, p.126.

It can be said that Tatarstan's leadership relied on gaining legitimacy through its politics of nationalism. The political survival strategy of the Republican leadership involved the elimination of the room left for democratic change. In fact, the conservative nomenklatura elites viewed nationality, which was the simplest form of identity that had been preserved in totalitarian society, as an instrument for keeping political power. Tatarstan's leadership sought to get rid of its competitors through turning the discontent of the people against the sources of regional instability. Their strategy involved the manipulation of interethnic conflicts in Tatarstan in such a way that only they could guarantee interethnic compromise and regional stability. For this purpose, the mass protest and electoral competition were manipulated to articulate the popular demands in national terms, and to project national images, which were promoted by Tatarstan's leadership, to the populace. In this way, Shaimiev has become able to play the role of a 'patron' (*zashchitnik*) of the Republican population.

The capacity of Tatarstan's leadership in maintaining its unity can be explained by the existence of value consensus and personal networks among its members. In terms of value consensus, although Tatar and Russian members of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership had some disagreements over political interests, they co-operated in defending their common economic interests. Moreover, concerning personal networks, although the members of Tatarstan's leadership were national in form, they were personalistic in content, because patronage networks and other forms of informal political relations have been very influential for elite mobility and regime formation in post-Soviet Tatarstan. Relying on a guiding leader or patron (Shaimiev) and pre-existing personal relationships, patronage networks became the vehicles of uniting the career interests of Tatarstan's politicians. In this way, Shaimiev recruited his entourage from politicians who are both loyal and reliable. Furthermore, Tatarstan's leadership has used the Republican patron-client networks to exploit state resources for personal gain. Consequently, corruption, which can be defined as the misuse of public office for private gain, has been the most common result of Shaimiev's pragmatic politics of Tatar nationalism.¹³

¹³ Marie Mendras, 'How Regional Elites Preserve Their Power', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.15, no.4, 1999, p.305.

Shaimiev's Discourse of Tatar Nationalism: Civic, Ethnic or Pragmatic?

The orientation of Tatarstan's leadership towards nationalism needs to be examined to clarify whether it qualifies as a form of nationalism. If so, this analysis should also clarify the type of Shaimiev's discourse of nationalism in terms of the typology of nationalism developed in the introduction chapter. In fact, Shaimiev's *nomenklatura* nationalism conforms to John Breuilly's definition of nationalism in that Shaimiev's nationalism represents a political movement seeking or exercising state power and justifying such action with the following assumptions: First, there exists a Tatar nation with an explicit and peculiar character. Second, the interests and values of the Tatar nation take priority over all other interests and values, otherwise regional stability might be endangered. Finally, the Tatar nation must be as independent as possible, which involved, in Shaimiev's case, the attainment of political sovereignty.

Having characterised Shaimiev's discourse as a form of nationalism, it should be noted that his version of *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* cannot be labelled as ethnic or civic nationalism because the Tatar members of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership have been nationalists of convenience rather than conviction. They pragmatically combine these types of nationalism in order to promote their own specific elite interests. Through playing these forms of nationalisms against each other, Tatarstan's leadership claims that only their version of nationalism could ensure the stability of Tatarstan in the face of the destabilising influences of other forms of nationalism.

Shaimiev has branded his version of Tatar nationalism as a civic form of nationalism. This could be seen in his public speeches. For example, during the celebration of the sixth anniversary of the Tatarstan declaration of sovereignty in August 1996, Shaimiev labelled Tatarstan's society as 'a multi-ethnic and multicultural democratic community, evolving into a civic nation of *Tatarstantsy* (Tatarstanis)'.¹⁴ It should be noted that Shaimiev has used the rhetoric of civic nationalism just to label his version of nationalism as a 'good' form of nationalism. Shaimiev's understanding of Tatar nationalism focused mainly on the economic aspects of Tatarstan's sovereignty. His use

¹⁴ Cited in Galina M. Yemelianova, 'Shaimiev's "Khanate" on the Volga and its Russian Subjects', (hereafter, 'Shaimiev's "Khanate"'), *Asian Ethnicity*, vol.1, no.1, 2000, p.49.

of the rhetoric of civic Tatar nationalism has allowed him to define ethnic problems as something technical rather than political. This way of depoliticising ethnic problems serves to avoid the alienation of non-titular ethnic groups. During his keynote speech at Harvard University (USA) on 6 October 1994, Mintimer Shaimiev said that,

Yes, we have enormous industrial potential. Yet, we used to live in such a system where the population could not take advantage of all these opportunities to make their lives better economically because of the over-centralised economy. This intensified the feeling of anger among the unemployed labour force.¹⁵

In fact, Shaimiev's version of nationalism involved respect for the state sovereignty of Tatarstan and respect for the multiethnic nature of Tatarstan. Shaimiev claimed that his 'centrist' position is vital for the protection of Tatarstan's state sovereignty and multiethnic stability in a manner that is very similar to the Soviet-era discourse of the 'friendship of nations'. Shaimiev asserted that his fight for sovereignty was aimed at increasing local self-government and economic well-being, which would benefit all inhabitants of their region, regardless of ethnicity.

In view of the intense growth of ethnic self-awareness among the peoples of Tatarstan, it is impossible to resolve any important issue without state sovereignty for the republic. But that point should not be the subject for speculation, nor should it be used as a weapon to promote political agendas. Unfortunately there are those both in Russia and in our republic who are attempting to use it in that manner. That is why sometimes the blows aimed at the President rain down from the left and from the right. But I take a firmly centrist position on this matter. And I am convinced that in a multiethnic republic there is no other position that the President can take. Otherwise there will be no avoiding confrontation between various segments of the population. The President's firmly centrist position plus complete independence with regard to deciding its own fate is Tatarstan's future.¹⁶

Nevertheless, this centrist position implies an authoritarian tendency, undermining the civic claims of interethnic harmony in Tatarstan.

Although Shaimiev sought to promote the ethnic revival of the Tatars, he did not want to achieve this at the expense of alienating the ethnic Russian population of Tatarstan and

¹⁵ Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'The Future of the Russian Federation: A Look [sic] from Tatarstan', (hereafter, 'The Future of the Russian Federation'), in *Suverennyi Tatarstan*, eds. Farid Kh. Mukhametshin and R. T. Ismailov, Moscow: Insan, 1997, p.55.

¹⁶ Aleksandr Kuteinitsyn and Viktor Churilov, 'Interv'iu s M. Sh. Shaimievom', *Delovaia zhizn'*, nos. 11-12, 1992, p.6.

the federal government in Moscow. Shaimiev has adopted a gradualist (*Akrinlap*) approach to the national concerns of Tatars. He also ruled out any radical policy towards Russia since it could provoke a civil war between the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan.

In our republic, we have the greatest respect for the Russian people. The good-heartedness of Russians has never permitted and will never permit them to pressurise the others. But attempts to influence the Russians and to accuse other peoples of neglecting them are so dangerous that they could lead to unforeseen consequences. But I remain firmly convinced that no one will be able to undermine the friendship that exists between Russians and Tatars and the other peoples of Tatarstan. Those who are hoping for that are going to be disappointed.¹⁷

Shaimiev sought to justify his view of Tatar nationalism in a territorial sense of Tatar national identity. Relying on the slogan that 'Tatarstan is for the Tatarstanis', Shaimiev made clear that he was committed to policies that reached out to both Tatars and Russians and to a multinational understanding (*mnogonatsional'nost'*) of Tatarstan. His strategy, in this respect, was to defend the rights of Tatars and Russians within the Republic, while opposing both Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalism.¹⁸

The state sovereignty of Tatarstan is crucial for Shaimiev's discourse of nationalism. Shaimiev defined Tatarstan's sovereignty as follows:

Tatarstan's sovereignty in its essence means that the republic has to acquire the political and economic powers and opportunities which would make it possible to improve the living standards of its population, better satisfy the cultural needs of the people, cherish and revive their best national traditions and encourage the development of national cultures.¹⁹

This notion of sovereignty privileges the state vis-à-vis the nation. In this sense, Shaimiev as the President of Tatarstan assumed the right to exercise the sovereignty of Tatarstan. Furthermore, Shaimiev's understanding of Tatarstan's sovereignty is rooted in the Soviet nationalities policy of believing in the importance of the state-sponsored ethno-cultural development. Conceiving ethnic groups as essentially permanent and unchangeable,

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.7.

¹⁸ Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'Nasha pozitsiia ostaetsia neizmennoi, no suverenitet respubliki Tatarstan ne budet imet' natsional'noi okraski', *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 17 August 1991.

¹⁹ *Sovetskaia Tatariia*, 31 August 1991.

Shaimiev argued that the government of Tatarstan should promote national cultures in the Republic.

Given the significance of the national question, it would be correct to set aside certain sums to support national cultures. Ultimately, that would be cheaper than later trying to put down conflicts. The threat of ethnic separatism is a problem that can be resolved on the basis of a well-adjusted national policy.²⁰

Although it is clear that Shaimiev's version of Tatar nationalism cannot be considered as a nationalising state nationalism that attempts to make a multicultural population culturally homogenous, it cannot be considered secessionist either. Even as Shaimiev recognised the validity of the right to self-determination, he is not a secessionist nationalist. In his own words, Shaimiev stated that '[T]he right to self-determination in the international sense of the term provides for various forms of organisation and secession is only an extreme measure.'²¹

Shaimiev is aware of the dangers of calling for independence. In his opinion, Tatars cannot achieve full independence from Moscow.

I can tell you that in Tatarstan in 1991 and 1992, I went to great nationalist rallies and they called on me to announce independence. But I knew that complete independence was totally unrealistic, so I braced myself and never once said this word.²²

For Shaimiev, to demand a complete break with Russia would have led to war, which is not in the interest of Tatarstan, since Tatarstan is too weak to engage in a military conflict with Moscow.

And I am afraid it could be a war without any results... I couldn't support this idea of independence before the people, knowing in advance that it couldn't be realised.²³

Shaimiev thinks that although the militarisation of Tatarstan's problems with Moscow is not in the interest of the Tatars, it is not in the interest of Moscow either. Therefore, Shaimiev warns that Moscow should avoid an armed conflict with the Tatars. For

²⁰ Vasilii Filippov, 'Interview with Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaimiev', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.6, no.3, 24 January 2001.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Rubin Trudy, 'Holding Russians at Bay', *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 15 February 1995.

²³ David Hoffman, 'Artful Regional Leader Slips Moscow's Grip', *Washington Post*, 16 June 1997.

example, Shaimiev asserted that '[t]he Tatars are the second biggest ethnic group in Russia. No sane politician would want a confrontation with Tatars.'²⁴

Despite the fact that both Moscow and the Tatars have much to lose in a case of ethnic conflict, Shaimiev argued that the ethnic factor should not be underestimated. According to Shaimiev, Tatar ethnic nationalists could manipulate the ethnic factor to mobilise the Tatars against Moscow, which was potentially dangerous:

This factor is always present in Tatarstan. In the 1990s there was a powerful national movement in the republic and even though today its influence on policy has weakened, nevertheless, national problems always play a big role in the social consciousness. It would be a mistake to underrate the ethnic factor. The main thing is for the authorities to avoid making the kind of mistakes that provide a basis for [ethnic activists] to unite and increase their strength.²⁵

Shaimiev has not been in favour of unification nationalism in the sense of uniting the Tatars in Tatarstan with the Tatars living in the Volga region. He has simply favoured promoting the interests of the Tatar Diaspora without uniting Tatarstan with the neighbouring republics, such as Bashkortostan. Shaimiev argued that ethnic problems of the Tatar Diaspora were by-products of the reluctance of the central authorities to grant formal rights to the republics. Thus, Shaimiev considered that Russia's centralised system of power and the lack of real federalism in Russia were the main barriers to the realisation of Tatar national interests.

The mechanism for realising the rights of nations in Russia must be developed. The constitution now says only one thing-it forbids secession. But the realisation of rights of nations is not limited to this. Take one example: I get letters all the time asking how can we listen to music sung in the Tatar language? This is the demand of any nation. People cannot hear the language they were raised in. I propose that a powerful radio station be set up in Tatarstan so Tatars all over can listen to their language. But this issue is not being addressed. There are many such problems. There is a problem with schoolbooks: we need to supply schools with textbooks in the Tatar language.²⁶

²⁴ John Thornhill, 'Island of Pragmatism in Russia', *Financial Times*, 20 February 1996.

²⁵ Vasilii Filippov, 'Interview with Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaimiev', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.6, no.3, 24 January 2001.

²⁶ Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'Conflict Prevention and Management: The Significance of Tatarstan's Experience', in *Preventing Deadly Conflicts Strategies and Institutions*, eds. Gail W. Lapidus and Svetlana Tsalik, New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1998, p.77.

Shaimiev's discourse of nationalism clearly points to the nomenklatura's desire to define a new role for themselves as a champion of the process of federalisation in Russia as well as the sole guarantor of the national interests of the Tatars and the interethnic peace in Tatarstan.

Shaimiev's Policy of Multinationalism and the Revival of Tatar Culture

Considering ethnic and civic forms of nationalism as threats to the survival of his political regime, Shaimiev sought to develop a multinational state which guarantees mainly ethnic and some civic rights to the nations within it. It is basically Tatarstan's multi-ethnic character that makes the formation of a purely ethnic Tatar nation in Tatarstan unlikely. In fact, Tatarstan's population of 3.7 million in 1989 is composed mainly of two nationalities; the Tatars (48.5 percent) and the Russians (43.3 percent). The remaining 8.2 percent are from other nationalities (See Table A4.2).²⁷ Accordingly, Shaimiev's discourse of multinationalism reflects this demographic composition of the Republic.

Tatarstan's declaration of state sovereignty in 1990 implies a multinational approach to the question of nation-building in the Republic. Its preamble refers to the 'inalienable right of the Tatar nation (*natsiia*) and all peoples of the Republic to self-determination'. Although all of the people of the Republic are mentioned, the priority was given to the Tatars. The multinational approach is also visible in Tatarstan's constitution whose Article 1 states that Tatarstan is 'a sovereign democratic state that expresses the will and interests of the entire multinational people of Tatarstan, whilst Article 3 guarantees the equality of all residents regardless of 'nationality, social position, religion, and political beliefs'.²⁸ The same approach could also be seen in Tatarstan's choice of state symbols. According to the resolution on the flag of Tatarstan, which was adopted on 29 November 1991, Tatarstan's tricolour flag represents the multinational harmony in Tatarstan. The upper green stripe of the flag represents the Islamic identity of Tatars, while the lower red

²⁷ Marat R. Mustafin and Rashid G. Khuzeev, *Vse o Tatarstane: Ekonomiko-geograficheskii spravochnik*, Kazan: Kazanskoe Knizhnoe Izd-vo, 1994, p.18.

stripe represents the Russian minority. The thin white stripe between green and red stripes represents the peace that unites Tatars and Russians.²⁹ On 7 February 1992, the Tatar coat of arms was introduced. Tatarstan's emblem, the white leopard (*akbars*), is an ethnic Tatar symbol that implies no hatred against the Russians. *Akbars* is believed to protect the people of Tatarstan.³⁰

The promotion of the Tatar language began with the adoption of a language law in 1992. After heated argument, the parliament rejected the idea of making Tatar the Republic's sole state language, instead gave Tatar and Russian equal rights. Nonetheless, the law significantly increased the status of the Tatar language, requiring that the government conduct its business and publish its laws in Tatar as well as Russian. The courts, media, industrial enterprises, public transport and scientific and cultural institutions were also required to use both languages in conducting their affairs and in interacting with the public. The law also established a language preservation programme whose goals included opening Tatar-language kindergartens, broadening Tatar-language education, and expanding Tatar publishing and broadcasting.³¹

According to Luiza Bairamova, the equal status of these two languages in Tatarstan neutralises the ethnic conflicts between Russians and Tatars. These languages perform different functions as Russian is a language of science and bureaucracy, while Tatar is used in the domestic sphere.³²

Echoing Bairamova's approach, Shaimiev justified the merits of Tatarstan's language law in terms of its contribution to the equality of the Tatar and Russian languages. Shaimiev said that,

²⁸ Rozalina N. Musina, 'Contemporary Ethnosocial and Ethnopolitical Processes in Tatarstan', in *Ethnic Conflict in the Post-Soviet World: Case Studies and Analysis*, eds. Leokadia M. Drobizheva et al., Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1996, p.203.

²⁹ Pat Jacobs, *Mini Flags Atlas of the World*, Finchampstead, Berks, UK: 1999, p.171.

³⁰ *Gosudarstvennaia simbolika Respubliki Tatarstan*, Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1997.

³¹ *Sovetskaia Tataria*, 30 May 1992.

³² Luiza Bairamova, 'Ravnopravie iazykov neitralizuet konflikty', *Nauchnyi Tatarstan*, vol.3, no.2, 1997, p.9.

You know the events in Moldavia developed in the negative way just for one reason – they declared one state language. You also know that similar situations are also arising in Ukraine and in Kazakhstan.... We declared two official languages yet, eventually, the native language will benefit from this, because it should be upgraded, and be given the conditions for its development.³³

According to Tatarstan's programme for the 'Development of Tatar National Education', which was adopted in 1991, Tatar national education is meant to instil in Tatar children respect and appreciation for the other peoples and cultures in Tatarstan. The document assumed that only a 'heightened consciousness of their own national identity' could help them truly respect other nationalities.³⁴ According to this programme, the mandatory study of the Tatar language and literature, with an average of 3.5 hours a week for all students in Tatarstan, regardless of nationality, starts from grade one. As a result of the implementation of this programme, the proportion of Tatar students who study all subjects in their native language became 43 percent by 1994. Moreover, the teaching of Tatar to non-Tatar students was expanded in June 1994, when it was decided that Tatar would be taught as a required subject in all of the Republic's schools. Besides, universities have also joined this campaign by expanding their Tatar language departments.³⁵

Rafael Khakimov explained the logic behind the multinational approach to education as if it was a reflection of the 'civic' nationalism of Tatarstan's leadership. During my interview with him, Khakimov stated that

Mari people wanted 5 years national education, but Tatarstan offered 8 years national education even though a legal basis for this does not exist. At present, there are 146 Chuvash, 44 Udmurt, 23 Mari and 7 Mordovian schools.³⁶

³³ Shaimiev, 'The Future of the Russian Federation', p.57.

³⁴ 'Kontsepsiia razvitiia tatarskogo obrazovaniia', *Panorama*, no.8, 1991, p.15.

³⁵ Katherine E. Graney, 'Education Reform in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan: Sovereignty Projects in Post-Soviet Russia', (hereafter, 'Education Reform in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan'), *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.51 no.4, 1999, pp.619-620.

³⁶ My interview with Rafael S. Khakimov, Tatarstan's Chief Presidential Advisor on Political Affairs, Presidential Palace, Kazan, 2 June 1998.

Contrary to Khakimov, I think that Shaimiev's promotion of multinationalism in Tatarstan cannot be considered adequate to label his policies as 'civic' since the discourse of multinationalism has been basically used by Tatarstan's leadership in order to justify the process of Tatarisation in post-Soviet Tatarstan.

Tatarstan's leadership considered the use of Tatar by the Republican scientific community very important for its politics of Tatar nationalism. During the Soviet period, academics working in Tataria's Republican affiliate of the USSR Academy of Sciences were subject to the Communist Party control over their choice of subject matter and their final projects. Likewise, the curriculum of the general education system of Tataria was determined in Moscow. The Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan (ANRT) was established in October 1991. Its first President Mansur Khasanov established a link between the creation of the ANRT and Tatarstan's quest for sovereignty as follows:

Without the sovereign right to decide our own scientific problems, we can't decide the socio-economic, political and cultural problems of state sovereignty and political-economic independence in the Republic of Tatarstan.³⁷

The Institute of History was formed within the ANRT in 1996 when several members of the ANRT declared the need for a conception of Tatar history which was up to 'international standards'. The lack of this independent history was said to be 'severely limiting sovereign Tatarstan'.³⁸ In the autumn of 1996 Shaimiev named his Adviser for Political Affairs, Rafael Khakimov, as the director of the Institute of History at the ANRT. Given his proximity to Shaimiev, Khakimov's appointment has served to promote the ideology that Tatarstan's leadership has been identified itself firmly with the 'civic Tatarstani' discourse in which the boundaries of the national community are identified with the territorial statehood of a sovereign Tatarstan. At the first public seminar held at the Institute of History of the ANRT Rafael Khakimov stated:

I believe that a 'territorial' approach to history is good, because we can advertise the Republic of Tatarstan. We can help further the development of a poly-ethnic, poly-cultural society if we show the poly-ethnic aspects of our territory's achievement, for example publicising the achievements of both Lobachevsky and Tatar scientists.³⁹

³⁷ Mansur Kh. Khasanov, 'Prioritet - interesy respubliki', *Sovetskaia Tataria*, 13 February 1993.

³⁸ 'Otkrytoe pis'mo deiatelei nauki i kul'tury Tatarstana Prezidentu M. Shaimievu', *Kris*, 17 May 1996.

Nevertheless, it is very difficult to take Khakimov's claims in favour of a 'territorial' approach at face value since, as discussed in Chapter Three, Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership has not limited its activities only to the people of Tatarstan. It has also sought to 'defend' the rights of Tatar diaspora occasionally. Furthermore, some members of the Institute of History stressed the need for writing more Tatar history books in order to rectify the years of Russian and Soviet 'falsification' of Tatar history.⁴⁰

In the field of mass media, apart from all of the federation-wide Russian television channels, Tatarstan has one Republic-wide television channel 'Tatarstan' and several city-based television services, including *Efir*, which is the television channel of Kazan's City Administration. The majority of services are in the Russian language, except for those on 'Tatarstan' channel, which broadcasts 71 percent of its radio programmes and 46 percent of television programmes in Tatar. In terms of print-media, there were 233 newspapers and 28 magazines and journals being published in Tatarstan in 1996. The following Tatar-language papers are subsidized from the state budget, and benefit from postal service discounts: *Respublika Tatarstan* (Republic of Tatarstan), *Vatanyrn Tatarstan* (Tatarstan Motherland), *Tatarstan Iashlare* (Youth of Tatarstan) and *Shakhri Kazan* (Kazan City). The following Russian-language papers are also subsidized from state budget: *Kazanskie vedomosti* (Kazan Gazette), *Kazanskoe vremia* (Kazan Time). A number of other Russian-language newspapers including *Vechernaia Kazan* (Evening Kazan), *Kris* and *Vremia i den'gi* (Time and Money) do not rely on official support.⁴¹ Partly because of the Republican control over Tatarstan's newspapers, the state-financed newspapers in Tatarstan promote mainly the Tatar culture.

Although the religion is separated from the state, Tatarstan's leadership characterises the people of Tatarstan in terms of their confessional identity. Shaimiev has characterised the Tatars as Muslim and the Russians as Christian, without actually providing statistical data on the confessional choices of Tatarstan's population. Besides, Tatarstan's government manipulates religious communities systematically to support its nation-

³⁹ Cited in Graney, 'Education Reform in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan', p.622.

⁴⁰ Damir M. Iskhakov, 'Tatarskaia istoriia budet napisana po-tatarskii', *Idel*, nos.1-2, 1997, pp.24-27.

⁴¹ Howard Davis, Philip Hammond and Lilia Nizamova, 'Changing Identities and Practices in Post-Soviet Journalism: The Case of Tatarstan', *European Journal of Communication*, vol.13, no.1, 1998, pp.80-81.

building policies in spite of secular legislation. Shaimiev, for example, defined the role of religion in the 'secular' state of Tatarstan as follows:

Tatarstan – a democratic state, seeks to promote the values and interests of all multinational peoples of Tatarstan. Its main ethnic groups belong to two main confessions: Islam and Christianity... Islam was discriminated against under the Tsarist and Soviet rules. Now, Noel and Kurban Bairam became official holidays.⁴²

Tatarstan's political establishment has very little interest and expertise in Islam as they have made their careers under the Soviet regime. For example, to the question 'Do you attend the Mosque?' Shaimiev replied that 'The Mosque? I am an atheist'.⁴³ Despite his secular background, Shaimiev views religion as an attribute of statehood.

Although Islam is taught in secular schools, secular Tatar leaders have been keen in not letting political Islamists stir inter-religious confrontations.⁴⁴ The existence of two rival muftis, Farid Salman and the more radical Gabdullah Galiullah, in Tatarstan made it difficult for Shaimiev to control Islamic groups in the Republic. To put the rival muftis under its own control, the Shaimiev leadership organised a unifying Islamic Congress *Kurultai*, which was attended by 718 delegates from all over Tatarstan, in Kazan in February 1998. The Congress elected the government-backed candidate, Gusman Ishakov, as the Republic's new mufti with 430 votes. Galiullah and Salman accused Shaimiev's administration of pressuring the delegates into voting for Ishakov. They pointed out the close relationship between Gusman Iskhakov's mother, Rashida Abystay, and Shaimiev's wife, Sakine Shaimieva.⁴⁵

Concerning the relations among the confessional communities in Tatarstan, Shaimiev has been manipulating the multiconfessional character of Tatarstan. He adopted a 'centrist' policy towards the Muslim, Orthodox and Jewish communities in Tatarstan. Shaimiev supports the construction of the Kul Sharif Mosque across the square from the onion-domed Russian Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation. He has also promised the Orthodox diocese that services at the cathedral will be resumed, but only after the

⁴² Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'Dialog religii, dialog kul'tur', in *Islamo-Khristianskoe pogranich'e: Itogi i perspektivy izucheniia*, ed. Ia. Abdullin, Kazan: IlALII ANT, 1994, p.2.

⁴³ Kira Vladina, 'Interv'iu s M. Sh. Shaimievom', *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 16 February 1994.

⁴⁴ Andrei Zolotov, 'Keeping Islam in Line', *Moscow Times*, 16 May 1998.

⁴⁵ Robert Coalson, 'Tatar Unity Summit Deepens Moslem Schism', *Moscow Times*, 17 February 1998.

completion of the Kul Sharif Mosque.⁴⁶ Tatarstan's leadership has also established very good relations with the Jewish community in Tatarstan. When the leaders of the Russian Jewish Congress met in Kazan to celebrate the reopening of a synagogue in 1996, Shaimiev held very constructive talks with Vladimir Gusinskii, the President of the Russian Jewish Congress. Since Gusinskii was also the Head of Most Bank, Shaimiev used this opportunity to convince Gusinskii to make more investment in Tatarstan's economy.⁴⁷

Tatarstan's post-Soviet drive to promote has not been welcome by all ethnic groups, in Tatarstan. Especially, some leaders of Tatarstan's ethnic Russians, such as the Chairperson of the Society of Russian Culture in Tatarstan, Aleksandr Salagaev, criticise the cultural policies of the republican leadership in the following way:

The cultural policy of the Government of Tatarstan doesn't provide for the existence of Russian culture on the territory of Republic. A policy that doesn't provide TV coverage of Russian artistic groups, artists, writers and painters, that doesn't publish their works in the printing house, and doesn't stage their plays at the theatre, condemns them to obscurity and gradual moral death. Given that there are no Russian papers in Tatarstan and that Russian national schools are not established in the capital of the Republic, the situation could be described as discriminatory.⁴⁸

Nevertheless, these concerns about the decline in the support for Russian culture seem exaggerated since Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership continue to provide some help to the cultural activities of the ethnic Russians in the Republic. It should be noted that the main problem for the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan stems not from the development of Tatar culture, but from the use of cultural criteria in order to Tatarise the key economic and political positions in the republic. It would be useful to look at the implications of these policies on the employment opportunities for the ethnic groups in Tatarstan in order to identify the economic impact of Tatarstan's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* on the ethnic Russian population of the Republic

⁴⁶ Ravil Bukharaev, *The Model of Tatarstan under President Mintimer Shaimiev*, (hereafter, *The Model of Tatarstan*), London: Curzon, 1999, p.5.

⁴⁷ Rachel Katz, 'Synagogue Reopens After 67 Years', *Moscow Times*, 17 December 1996.

⁴⁸ Aleksandr L. Salagaev, 'Russkie v Republike Tatarstan', *Kris*, 5 March 1997.

The Expansion of Employment Opportunities for the Tatars

The politics of nation-building is more than just a means of identification with a nation. It is also about power, status and employment opportunities. Likewise, the nation-building policies of Tatarstan's leadership, which adopted employment practices that would ensure that political power rested with the Tatars, resulted in an increase in the employment opportunities for the Tatars. However, the implementation of the language law began slowly, particularly in the industrial and commercial spheres. To speed up implementation, the Supreme Soviet adopted the 'State programme for the preservation, study and development of the languages of the peoples of the Tatarstan Republic' in the summer of 1994. Despite its name, this programme is mainly devoted to the preservation, study and development of the Tatar language. While the majority of the 126 points in the programme are devoted explicitly to Tatar, the other points address all of the languages spoken in Tatarstan in equal measure, and none addresses Russian exclusively. The programme recommended the knowledge of both state languages for several professions, including the Presidency (Article 1), a 15 percent salary bonus for such bilingual professionals (Article 11) and the expansion of Tatar language education and media (Articles 3,4,7 and 9).⁴⁹

The spread of Tatar throughout public life was the result of language programme. However, this is not hailed by the non-Tatar peoples of Tatarstan, including the Russians, since the gradual process of eliminating Russians from the power structures and the key economic, administrative and teaching positions has been conducted under the pretext of restoring the linguistic balance in the Republic. Although the Russians may not be forced to learn Tatar, it was anticipated that it could be very difficult for the non-Tatars to find jobs in the future, or they could even lose their jobs. Aleksandr Shtanin argued that:

⁴⁹ *Zakon Respubliki Tatarstan o iazykakh narodov Respubliki Tatarstan. Gosudarstvennaia programma Respubliki Tatarstan po sokhraneniui, izucheniiu i razvitiui iazykov narodov Respubliki Tatarstan*, Kazan: Izd-vo Gosudarstvennyi Sovet Respubliki Tatarstan, 1996.

Already from tomorrow the paragraph about official business correspondence, for example, can be put into effect. That is, you may be dismissed for not being able to fill out some form in two languages.⁵⁰

These language policies expanded the job opportunities of Tatar-language teachers, and increased the proportion of Tatars within the intelligentsia in Tatarstan. The expansion of cultural programmes and new centres required workers to staff and manage them. In the Ministry of Education, the ethnic schools department was expanded, the position of assistant department head in charge of ethnic education was created in each district and city education department, and there was a vast increase in the number of openings for Tatar language teachers. There were only four Russian writers in the Tatarstan Union of Writers, which has almost 400 members. There has been Tatarisation of newspapers' editorial boards, and the Republican radio and television company 'Tatarstan'. The government has created state centres for the collection and dissemination of Tatar folklore and for the promotion of Tatar culture. By 1995, 1,645 Tatar clubs, over 100 folklore ensembles and 1,063 Tatar libraries existed throughout the Republic.⁵¹

The expansion of opportunities extended into the private sector as well. By law, each enterprise has to employ a Tatar speaker to deal with Tatar-speaking customers. The requirement for bilingualism in consumer services, trade, health care, and state offices is presented not as a form of discrimination, but as a citizen's right to communicate with a state office in the state language of which he has a better command, and to receive an answer in the same language. Despite these changes, most official communication continues to be carried out in Russian, because Tatar is still considered to be less sophisticated than Russian in terms of its legal or social science vocabulary.⁵²

The most politically significant expansion of opportunity occurred at the top. The constitution was written to require the President of Tatarstan to know both Tatar and Russian, virtually ensuring that only Tatars would hold that office in the foreseeable future (Article 108). I. Spirin argues that between 1990 and 1995 the Republican leadership became much more Tatar-dominated than it had ever been. Tatars are over-

⁵⁰ Cited in Dmitrii Mikhailin, 'Tatarskii mozhem "my ne znat". No mogut s dolzhnosti uvolit'', *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 23 July 1992.

⁵¹ Dmitry Gorenburg, 'Regional Separatism in Russia: Ethnic Mobilisation or Power Grab?', (hereafter, 'Regional Separatism in Russia'), *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.51, no.2, 1999, p.262.

⁵² Aleksandr Kasimov, 'Tatarstan', *Politicheskii monitor*, no.5, 1993, p.78.

represented in legislative and executive bodies of Tatarstan. For example, 73 percent of the deputies in the State Council are Tatars, while only 25 percent are Russians.⁵³

The Russians are not proportionally represented at the local level either. In 1992, only 25 percent of local administrators were ethnic Russian, although ethnic Russians form 43 percent of the Republican population. Out of the sixty-one local administrators forty-nine were ethnic Tatars and twelve were ethnic Russians. In fifteen districts, where the Tatar population constitute the minority (as low as 29 percent), Tatar officials were in charge.⁵⁴

The process of Tatarisation can also be identified by looking at the change in the ethnic composition of Tatarstan's elites, as recognised by Tatarstan's government in its publications of Who is Who (*Kto est' kto*) in 1993 and 1996. There has been a visible change in favour of the Tatars in the composition of the Republican political, economic and cultural elites (See Table A4.6 and Table A4.7).⁵⁵ Between 1993 and 1996, Tatarstan's top leadership became more Tatarised as the a Russian occupying the post of Vice Presidency became the Speaker of the Parliament in 1995, while the more prestigious post of Vice Presidency was abolished (All of the three top positions of the Republic became Tatarised in 1997 when the ethnic Russian Speaker of Parliament became the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the European Union. While the percentage of the Russians in the ethnic composition of Tatarstan's economic and cultural elites declined sharply, the Tatars increased their shares in the ethnic composition of Tatarstan's economic (especially financial sector managers) and cultural elites. As Liliia Sagitova argues, Tatarstan's post-Soviet elites mainly defend their group interests by using the nationality card when needed, because ethnic differences could easily be manipulated by the mostly Tatar leadership of the Republic in order to mobilise masses to defend Tatarstan's 'sovereignty' as defined by the Republican leadership.⁵⁶

⁵³ I. A. Spirin, 'Etnokratiia v Tatarstane', in *Etnopolitika na poroge XXI veka*, Kazan, 1995, p.87.

⁵⁴ *Sovietskaia Tatariia*, 3 April 1993, p.7.

⁵⁵ Evgenii A. Lisin, *et.al.*, *Kto est' kto v Respublike Tatarstan*, Kazan: Gazetno-zhurnal'noe izd-vo, 1993, and Evgenii A. Lisin, *et.al.*, *Kto est' kto v Respublike Tatarstan*, Kazan: Star, 1996.

⁵⁶ Liliia V. Sagitova, *Etnichnost' v Sovremennom Tatarstane: Vosproizvodstvo etnichnosti v tatarstanskom obshchestve na rubezhe 1980-1990-kh gg. (Po materialam respublikanskoi pressy i etnosotsiologicheskikh issledovani)*, Kazan: Institut Istorii ANT, 1998, p.173.

The Politics of Economic Reform and *Prikhvatizatsiia*

Shaimiev's pragmatic policies of Tatarising the Republic can also be seen in his attempts to transfer the ownership of the Republican economic resources into the hands of Tatarstan's leadership, which is mainly composed of ethnic Tatars. Shaimiev was a fierce critic of the 'shock therapy', which was adopted by the Russian Prime Minister Egor Gaidar in 1992. Shaimiev justified his policies as follows:

Shock therapy affected a big proportion of the population and resulted in a landslide of impoverishment. We therefore decided to change things more gradually in Tatarstan.⁵⁷

Although Tatarstan was labelled as an 'island of communism' opposing the liberalisation of prices, the privatisation of state property and the termination of credits to obsolete industrial plants, Shaimiev's criticism of the 'shock therapy' is not related to his Communist background, but to his desire to control the economic resources of the Republic.⁵⁸ In 1993, Prime Minister Mukhammat Sabirov attempted to justify Tatarstan's control of the economy and its conservative position towards market reforms as follows:

Why is the economy of Tatarstan in better shape than that of other regions?... It is because we retained control over the economy. We are moving towards the market, but not in a hurry, carefully analysing each step. We do not command the enterprises but we control them through economic levers.⁵⁹

Shaimiev's conservative policies contributed to the growth of his popularity, since Shaimiev's 'soft entry' into the free market involved controlling prices and the use of Tatarstan's oil revenues to preserve the social safety net in Tatarstan. The economic policies of accommodating the masses at the expense of delaying structural economic reforms resulted in serious economic problems in the Republican agriculture and industry. Behind the reluctance of the Republican leadership in pursuing liberal market reforms, one could identify the fact that economic restructuring is very likely to be accompanied by high rates of unemployment. Russians are over-represented in managerial and skill-based positions, while Tatars are also over-represented in blue-collar

⁵⁷ John Thornhill, 'Island of Pragmatism in Russia', *Financial Times*, 20 February 1996.

⁵⁸ Leokadia M. Drobizheva, *et. al.*, *Demokratizatsiia i obrazy natsionalizma v Rossiiskoi Federatsii 90-kh godov*, Moscow: Mysl', 1996, pp.232-243.

⁵⁹ *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 25 February 1993.

jobs, the most likely positions to suffer major cutbacks. Tatars are over-represented in the cultural and scientific intelligentsia, a group that has been hit particularly hard by reduced government support. Under these conditions, the costs of reform will be born disproportionately by the Tatars.

While maintaining the interethnic peace in the Republic, Tatarstan's leadership focused also on bringing the economic resources of the Republic under Tatarstan's state sovereignty. Jean-Robert Ravieaux argues that economic sovereignty constituted the essential core of Tatarstan's post-Soviet politics of nationalism.⁶⁰ During the Soviet period, the TASSR owned only two percent of the property located in the Republic, while the eighty percent of its economic potential belonged to the ministries of the Soviet Union, and the remaining eighteen percent belonged to those of the RSFSR. Therefore, Tatarstan's leaders campaigned not for national self-determination, but for greater economic autonomy and the control over Tatarstan's rich natural resources.

Tatarstan's economic policy has been directed to gain the control of economic assets in Tatarstan rather than to construct a market economy. In 1994, Tatarstan's pro-market groups headed by Deputy Premier Ravil Muratov prepared a programme of market liberalisation with the help of specialists of the American Company, 'Monitor'. Basically, the program proposed to transfer the control over the enterprises to private companies and foundations, reserving to the government merely the controlling blocks of shares of strategically significant enterprises. The program also contemplated terminating state capital investments completely in all spheres except the social sphere. The programme asked Tatarstan's parliament to restrict the government's right to grant tax privileges. Moreover, the President was also expected to give up his special powers in the economic sphere. Furthermore, the State Property Committee of Tatarstan was deprived of the controlling block of shares. The programme declared its long-term objective as one of converting Tatarstan into a competitive region by stopping funding of inefficient projects.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Jean-Robert Ravieaux, 'Tipy natsionalizma, obshchestvo i politika v Tatarstane', *Politicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.3, no.5-6, 1992, p.50.

⁶¹ *Moskovskie novosti*, 24 March 1996.

The key component of this program of market liberalisation was the programme of privatisation. However, Tatarstan's conduct of privatisation could be described as *prikhvatizatsiia* (insider property 'grabbing' during privatisation), because Tatarstan has privatised almost 300 enterprises under controversial circumstances since 1994.⁶² Marie Bennigsen-Broxup argues that the Tatar government played the nationalist card until the ownership of Republican resources were divided up among the Presidential inner circle.⁶³ While minimising the role of state in the economic sphere, the conduct of the privatisation programme enriched Tatarstan's leadership, and enabled them to continue to control the Republican economy informally. Consequently, Tatarstan's privatisation programme served the interests of the Republican leadership as well as enterprise directors, which was also the case in Russia's first wave of privatisation between 1992 and 1993.⁶⁴

Unlike Russian reformers, the conduct of privatisation programme in Tatarstan has not divided Tatarstan's leadership into opposing camps. Instead, Tatarstan's privatisation programme consolidated the internal unity of the Republican leadership because Shaimiev accommodated both the winners and the losers of the privatisation programme. For example, although Shaimiev replaced Prime Minister, Mukhammat Sabirov, with the more reformist Farid Mukhametshin to implement the economic reform programme, he succeeded in developing his own virtually no-lose version, with Sabirov becoming the director of a privatised company.

The members of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership were national in form but personalistic in content. Their understanding of the politics of nationalism reflected Ambrose Bierce's following definition of politics in his *Devil's Dictionary* (1958): 'Politics: A strife of interests masquerading as principles. The conduct of public affairs for private advantage'.⁶⁵ Not surprisingly, Shaimiev's politics of economic reform led to widespread corruption and nepotism. According to John Kramer, the opportunities for corruption increase when 'the government retains the discretionary right to regulate

⁶² For the legal framework of these privatisations, see *Osnovnye zakony i polozheniia po privatizatsii v Respublike Tatarstan*, Kazan: Izdanie Verkhovnogo Soveta Respubliki Tatarstan, 1994.

⁶³ Marie Bennigsen-Broxup, 'Tatarstan and the Tatars', in *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States*, ed. Graham Smith, New York: Longman, 2nd ed., 1996, p.86.

⁶⁴ Michael McFaul, 'State Power, Institutional Change and the Politics of Privatization in Russia', *World Politics*, vol.47, no.2, 1995, p.211.

numerous human activities while simultaneously failing to delimit with precision and clarity the formal roles of public officials.’⁶⁶

Accordingly, the key positions in the economy and administration were distributed among relatives or close associates of the Shaimiev family. Although there has been no concrete evidence of personal corruption involving the President yet, his two sons Airat and Radik have become very rich owing to their positions in the oil industry and trade. Shaimiev’s son, Airat Shaimiev, became a member of the Board of Directors of Tatarstan’s oil company Tatneft in 1996 and still owns 5 percent of the company. Shaimiev’s nephew, Ilshat Fardiev, is the mayor of the oil-producing town of Almetevskii, and works in Tatneft’s management. Tatneft’s Board of Directors include several representatives of Tatarstan’s leadership, such as the Prime Minister, the Chairperson of Tatarstan’s State Property Committee, and the Minister of Economy. The Director of Tatar-American Investments and Finances (TAIF) company is also a member of Tatneft’s Board of Directors.⁶⁷ To cope with the public criticism of the Shaimiev family’s control of the Republican oil, Albert Shigabutdinov, the director of TAIF, defended the Shaimiev family by saying that the ‘oil belongs not to the people of Tatarstan, but Tatneft’s shareholders’.⁶⁸

Shigabutdinov’s active defence of the Shaimiev family could be related to the fact that it is also through his company that the Shaimiev family maintains their connection to the oil industry. Shaimiev’s youngest son, Radik Shaimiev, Chairs the Board of Directors of TAIF, whose yearly turnover has been about one billion dollars. The company’s Board of Directors also includes Rinat Galeev, General Director of Tatneft and Nikolai Lemaev, the former General Director of Nizhnekamskneftekhim.⁶⁹ Tatarstan’s government has treated TAIF favourably. For example, on 17 October 1996, the Tatarstan Cabinet of Ministers adopted a decree giving TAIF the right to buy at an agreed upon price one million tons of crude oil from Tatneft without paying taxes. Only one person opposed this arrangement, the Republican Finance Minister, Dmitrii Nagumanov. Therefore, Shaimiev

⁶⁵ Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil’s Dictionary*, New York: Dover, 1958, p.101.

⁶⁶ John M. Kramer, ‘The Politics of Corruption’, *Current History*, vol.97, no.621, 1998, p.332.

⁶⁷ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, ‘Shaimiev Family Benefits From Tatneft Ties’, *Russian Regional Report*, vol.2, no.36, 23 October 1997.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

replaced him with Rustam Minnekhanov, who has been his son Radik Shaimiev's close friend. When Minnekhanov became Tatarstan's Prime Minister in 1998, he issued a decree requiring Tatneft to sell crude oil to Tatarstan's Ministry of Finance at 350 rubles a ton. This price was cheap since Shaimiev had already been complaining that the price of oil was too low at 500-600 rubles a ton. Despite this, Ministry of Finance sold the oil to the Nizhnekamskneftekhim Company of TAIF even cheaper at 300 rubles a ton. Nizhnekamskneftekhim, which turns the crude oil into fuel oil, sold the fuel oil back to Tatarstan's government at the normal market prices. This is how Tatarstan's leadership have enriched themselves through TAIF.⁷⁰

During my interview with him, Prof. Midkhat Farukshin, the Head of Department of Political Science of Kazan State University, explained the selfishness of the Republican authorities as follows:

Tatarstan's leadership has not been clear about what sovereignty is and how it could be exercised. The Republican leaders cared solely for their own interests without carrying out necessary economic and political reforms at a time when the ordinary people worried about their economic survival.⁷¹

Three months after my interview, Prof. Farukshin summarised his complaint about the Republican authorities in an interview with Tatarstan's popular newspaper, *Vecherniaia Kazan*, through a rhetorical question: 'Why in the Republic, so rich in natural resources and clever people, do the citizens suffer because of those unskilful and stupid authorities?'⁷²

Unlike the wealthy leaders of Tatarstan, the largest segments of the population in Tatarstan find the economic situation unbearable. In response to the criticisms against the Republican economic policy, Tatarstan's leadership pointed out that Tatarstan's population lives in better economic conditions compared to other republics and regions of the Russian Federation. In fact, Tatarstan's official minimum wage of 350 rubles (60 US Dollars) a month, was higher than the Russian average in 1998. However, this applies

⁶⁹ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Tatarstan's Oil Has Already Been Divided Up', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.2, no.38, 6 November 1997.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ My interview with Prof. Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Chairperson of the Department of Political Science at the Kazan State University, Kazan, 2 June 1998.

⁷² *Vecherniaia Kazan*, 11 September 1998.

only to those employed in Tatarstan government agencies or organisations funded from the Republican (but not from the federal) budget.

The people around Shaimiev, who have benefited from Tatarstan's economic policies, have not taken the people's plight into account.⁷³ Despite the economic problems of the masses, there is a growth in the number of state employees. The number of Republican-level employees (not counting those working on the local level) has increased seven-fold and the number of managerial departments has risen from 18 to 52 between 1992 and 1998.⁷⁴ It is clear that the Republican leadership seeks to attain social consent to their policies rather than economic development in the republic.

The Absence of Russian Backlash I: Patronage Politics

Despite Shaimiev's discourse of multinationality and the efforts of the intellectuals around him in describing his politics of nationalism as a civic version of Tatar nationalism, in reality, there has been a persistent Tatarisation of the cultural, administrative and economic spheres. Although this process of Tatarisation discriminates against the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan, there has not been any Russian backlash yet. An explanation of the absence of any significant Russian backlash to the process of Tatarisation in Tatarstan could give us more information on the working of the political system in Tatarstan.

Apart from the nature of the political system in Tatarstan, there are two other explanations for the absence of any Russian backlash to the process of Tatarisation, both of which will be explored in the following two chapters. One of these causes is the post-Soviet weakness of Moscow, which will be discussed in detail in chapter three in terms of Moscow's capacity to control its regional governments, including Tatarstan. Concerning their relations with Moscow, the Russians in Tatarstan, who feel trapped within the ethno-political agenda of Tatarstan's leadership, complain that Moscow has abandoned

⁷³ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Tatarstan Elites Oblivious To People's Plight', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.3, no.39, 1 October 1998.

⁷⁴ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Tatarstan: Economy Shrinks, Bureaucracy Grows', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.3, no.23, 11 June 1998.

them and left them to the mercy of the Tatarstan government in exchange for Tatarstan's compliance with Moscow. The other cause is the socio-cultural characteristics of Tatarstan, which will be discussed in detail in chapter four in terms of the weakness of ethnic Russians in Tatarstan to react quickly to the sudden decline in their privileged position which they used to take for granted during the Soviet era.

Concerning the working of the political system in Tatarstan, the absence of any significant Russian backlash to the process of Tatarisation in Tatarstan could be explained in terms of their political dependence on Tatarstan's leadership, despite their resentments about the Tatarisation process. This dependence is secured first through patronage networks and second through Tatarstan's electoral engineering that results in elections without choices.

Shaimiev's patronage networks, which serve to co-opt some ethnic Russians to Tatarstan's leadership, are the main cause of the absence of any serious Russian backlash to the process of Tatarisation in Tatarstan. In order to co-opt ethnic Russians, Shaimiev refrained from adopting ethnic Tatar nationalism, which might alienate ethnic Russians and destabilise the interethnic relations in Tatarstan. Besides, the policy of co-opting ethnic Russians served to divide the Russian community in Tatarstan. Cynthia Kaplan explains how Shaimiev has consolidated the political power in Tatarstan in his own hands through his policy of co-optation as follows:

He [Shaimiev - OFT] sought to coopt the issue of nationalism from radical elements within the radical Tatar community and pay off others who might not normally prefer sovereignty, i.e., ethnic Russians. ... In doing this, Shaimiev succeeded in shifting power from representative institutions to administrative ones which he controlled.⁷⁵

Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership derived much of its power from the patronage networks in the Republic. Patronage can be seen as a method of allocating bureaucratic positions, access to scarce resources, language rights, educational opportunities, jobs and government contracts.⁷⁶ Since Shaimiev used these patronage methods effectively, he earned the nickname, *Babai*, the Tatar word for grandfather. However, some Russian

⁷⁵ Cynthia S. Kaplan, 'International Negotiations and Plural Societies: The Cases of Estonia and Tatarstan', *International Negotiation*, vol.2, no.1, 1997, p.66.

politicians resent his patriarchal approach to politics. For example, Ivan Grachev, a Deputy from Tatarstan in the Russian Parliament, says that Shaimiev has 'the total power of a monarch'.⁷⁷ However, his powers can hardly be compared to that of a monarch. His strength comes not from his authoritarianism, but from his capacity to accommodate the significant political forces in Tatarstan. On the other extreme, Ravil Bukharaev was also equally wrong in arguing that 'there is a democracy in Tatarstan, as all the opponents of the President are free to define him as they see fit'.⁷⁸ However, the diversity of opinions about Shaimiev does not mean that Shaimiev tolerates independent political activity in Tatarstan.

Although there are various small groups of uncoordinated political opposition that call themselves 'parties' and 'political movements', their ability to organise and consolidate support outside the parliament is quite weak. Thus, these groups have no bearing on Shaimiev's policy-making. Furthermore, none of the leaders of the local parties or senior representatives of the all-Russian movements has a substantial political influence in Tatarstan. Reflecting the weak nature of political opposition in Tatarstan, Tatarstan's parliament does not show any kind of organised opposition either. The parliament is completely subservient to Shaimiev. Just like in the old Soviet days, the parliament generally approves any bill or resolution submitted by the government or supported by the President. This is partly related to the patronage politics of Shaimiev. In fact, one must avoid quarrelling with Shaimiev in order to stay in office in the legislature or in the government. In general, personnel appointments and operational decision-making in Tatarstan are strictly centralised. Every manager of not only state-owned enterprises, but also of private joint stock companies, knows that his or her future depends on Shaimiev. Tatarstan's media also finds itself in utter financial and personal dependency on the administration, and the President in particular.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, *Local Heroes: The Political Economy of Russian Regional Governance* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997, p.10.

⁷⁷ David Hoffman, 'Artful Regional Leader Slips Moscow's Grip', *Washington Post*, 16 June 1997.

⁷⁸ Bukharaev's emphasis. Bukharaev, *The Model of Tatarstan*, p.54.

⁷⁹ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, *et.al.*, *Politicheskaya sistema Respubliki Tatarstan*, (hereafter, *Politicheskaya sistema Respubliki Tatarstan*), Kazan: KGU, 1995, p.14.

In order to maintain his 'neutrality' in Tatarstan's politics, which is a vital condition for the success of his patronage networks, Shaimiev has refrained from identifying himself with any of the parties in the Republic. It is for this reason that Tatarstan's leadership established its own political party to form its own power base. Initially, Shaimiev's close associate, Mukhammat Sabirov, founded the Republican Party of Tatarstan (*Respublikanskaia Partiiia Tatarstana*) in January 1992.⁸⁰ When it became clear that this party was unable to attract the loyalty of the masses to the Republican leadership, Rafael Khakimov, Shaimiev's Chief Advisor established the Party of Unity and Progress (*Edinstvo i progress*) in August 1993.⁸¹ This party of power enables Tatarstan's leadership to intervene into Tatarstan's politics, without creating legal problems for its 'democratic image'.

The ethnic Russians in Tatarstan have tended to support mainly the 'liberal reformers' in Tatarstan. The most influential ethnic Russian politician is Ivan Grachev, who is one of Tatarstan's five deputies in the Russian parliament. His party, *Ravnopravie i zakonnost*, maintains very close relations with Grigorii Iavlinskii's *Iabloko* Party in Moscow. *Ravnopravie i zakonnost* has been lobbying for the economic interests of powerful ethnic Russians in Tatarstan. This party also serves to unite a number of smaller parties and organisations of liberal, human rights and moderate orientation. Among them are Aleksandr Salagaev's *Grazhdane Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (Citizens of the Russian Federation) and Vladimir Beliaev's *Soglasie* (Accord), the local branches of the LDPR, as well as a number of social-democratic groups. Radical ethnic Russians from communist hard liners to extreme Russian nationalists have joined forces in the *Narodno-patrioticheskii soiuz* (Popular Patriotic Union). Apart from this, the right-wing organisation, Russian National Assembly, is the other influential ethnic Russian group in Tatarstan.⁸²

Just like the ethnic Russian parties, the Tatar ethnic nationalist parties such as Fauziia Bairamova's *Ittifak*, have increasingly become fragmented and marginalized in Tatarstan's politics. Being aware of its marginal position, the *Ittifak* party has been

⁸⁰ Gaial Murtazin, 'Formirovanie Respublikanskoi Partii Tatarstana i Milli Mejliisa Tatarskogo naroda', *Suverenitet*, no.11, 1993, p.32.

⁸¹ 'Programma Respublikanskoi Partii Edinstvo i Progress', *Izvestiia Tatarstana* 15 December 1993.

⁸² Farukshin, *et.al.*, *Politicheskaiia sistema Respubliki Tatarstan*, p.30.

backing the communists in Tatarstan since 1994. In July 1996, the regional branch of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and Ittifak formed a coalition, which led to the formation of a new party, *Umit* (hope), in November 1998. A Tatar nationalist Galiullin Gabdulla became the Chairperson of this party.⁸³

The disunity of political opposition, both Russian and Tatar, enabled Shaimiev to consolidate his power in Tatarstan. In fact, the state structure of Tatarstan is based on a system of a strong Presidency.⁸⁴ The Tatar government works under close supervision by the President and does not enjoy much power in practice. The extent of centralisation of power at the executive level is evident even in personnel appointments. Since 1995, Shaimiev has appointed the government and all representatives of executive power personally without parliamentary ratification. Shaimiev also sacks unwanted ministers and mayors. Shaimiev's arbitrary rule has affected the ethnic Russian members of Tatarstan's leadership negatively. For example, when Vasilii Likhachev, the ethnic Russian speaker of Tatarstan's legislature, warned that 'at least one ethnic Russian should occupy one of the highest posts in Tatarstan if we want to preserve a centrist position, stability and security', Tatar Prime Minister Farid Mukhametshin described these concerns as groundless.⁸⁵ However, Likhachev's concerns were vindicated later when the Tatars, following Likhachev's appointment to the European Union as Russian ambassador, occupied all leading positions in the Republic. In his place, the Republican parliament elected former Prime Minister Farid Mukhametshin as its speaker on 27 May 1997.⁸⁶ Consequently, the top three people in Tatarstan (President, Prime Minister and Speaker of the Parliament) were all ethnic Tatars.⁸⁷

Relying on his political influence in the Republic, Shaimiev arbitrarily appoints and dismisses the heads of regional administrations as well. In Tatarstan, there are 43

⁸³ Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Ob"edinennaia oppositsiia i izbiratel'noe zakonodatel'stvo v Respublike Tatarstan', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.191.

⁸⁴ Farukshin, *et.al.*, *Politicheskaia sistema Respubliki Tatarstan*, pp.43-53.

⁸⁵ Robert Orttung, 'Tatarstan's Speaker Warns against Attempts to Remove Him', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.2, no.15, 30 April 1997.

⁸⁶ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Tatarstan's Leadership Reshuffle Shows Incipient Pluralism', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.3, no.22, 4 June 1998.

⁸⁷ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Tatarstan's Government Reshuffle Lacks Transparency', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.3, no.29, 30 July 1998.

districts, 20 cities, 21 towns and 897 village councils. Shaimiev appointed 36 out of the 54 heads of district and city administrations as the Chairpersons of local councils. Imitating the nepotistic policies of Shaimiev, Tatarstan's local administrators, who are appointed by Shaimiev, have developed some authoritarian practices at the local level. For example, Tatarstan's weekly newspaper, *Kazanskoe vremia*, published an open letter signed by 46 residents of the Sarmanovskii district describing the arbitrary behaviour of the Head of the District Administration, Anvar Zalakov. Upon becoming the regional boss, Zalakov arbitrarily fired seventy people, to be replaced with his own relatives. The letter rhetorically proposed to rename Sarmanovskii district as Zalakovskii, since the District *de facto* works for the Zalakov family.⁸⁸

Shaimiev's patronage practices and nepotism have been condoned by the media. However, Rafael Khakimov evaluates the media practices positively, as if democracy functions fully in Tatarstan. Khakimov asserts that:

In the republic [Tatarstan-OFT], only lazy newspapers or lazy journalists did not criticise the government, the presidency and the president himself. Every citizen of the republic is able to establish any newspaper and join any party, or found a party of his own and register it as such.⁸⁹

However, the reality is very different from the picture drawn by Shaimiev's Chief advisor, Rafael Khakimov. In fact, Shaimiev's regime does not feel very secure concerning a small number of nationalist publications, tied to political organisations, such as *Izvestiia VTOTs* (owned by the VTOTs) and *Altyn Urda*, which means 'Golden Horde' (owned by the Ittifak Party).⁹⁰ A city court in Naberezhnye Chelny has closed down *Altyn Urda* on the grounds that the newspaper had violated the federal law on the press by publishing in two languages - Tatar and Russian - while it was registered as a Tatar-language newspaper. *Altyn Urda* was closed not only because it was sowing seeds of nationalism among the Tatars, but also because it was oppositional. Unlike most media in Tatarstan, in which criticism of Shaimiev and his regime is taboo, the newspaper slammed the corruption in the Presidential Administration. Another case of Shaimiev's

⁸⁸ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Regional Boss in Tatarstan Builds Local Empire', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.2, no.35, 16 October 1997.

⁸⁹ Cited in Bukharaev, *The Model of Tatarstan*, p.156.

⁹⁰ Howard Davis, Philip Hammond and Lilia Nizamova, 'Media, Language Policy and Cultural Change in Tatarstan: Historic vs. Pragmatic Claims to Nationhood', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.6, no.2, 2000, p.212.

persecution of the disloyal press was the closure of *Kris*. Although its owners did not have any affiliation to any nationalist movement, they were subjected to the same persecution. The reason was that the newspaper gathered 135,000 signatures demanding a referendum on the direct election of administration chiefs. It also questioned the value of the World Tatar Congress. Thus, Tatarstan's leadership immediately arrested Albert Ishkuvatov, the publisher of *Kris*, of tax evasion.⁹¹

Several scholars, such as Ravil Bukharaev, rush to legitimise Shaimiev's regime without considering these arbitrary practices. Bukharaev goes even further in categorising Tatarstan's regime as democracy.

Tatarstan indeed shows all signs of democracy, although this democracy has never meant a 'free for all'. During the transition period, the authorities closed only one newspaper and that was the newspaper of the Tatar radical opposition. It was closed for inciting interethnic hostility...and thus destabilising the ethnic balance in the Republic. The *Vecherniaia Kazan*, for all the irritation it causes to the republican authorities of various ranks in the best traditions of 'unbridled journalism', is able to do so every day. If that is not democracy, then what is it?⁹²

However, Tatarstan's leadership tolerated alternative opinions only when they were not considered threatening. In fact, Shaimiev made it illegal to 'insult' him. However, it is very ambiguous to differentiate insult from criticism. According to Shaimiev's decree, anyone who insults him will be fined 20 times the minimum monthly wage, or 4 million rubles (800 US Dollars). Repeat offenders whose insults are reported by the media are also liable for fines up to 7 million rubles (1,400 US Dollars). The fines for newspapers and magazines are even higher. The decree states that the offending publication will pay 30 million rubles (6,000 US Dollars).⁹³

⁹¹ Andrei Zolotov, 'Tatarstan Closes Down Opposition Newspaper', *Moscow Times*, 28 April 1998.

⁹² Bukharaev, *The Model of Tatarstan*, p.156.

⁹³ *Moscow Times*, 25 June 1996. These fines were set in 1996 when old rouble was still in circulation (1 New Ruble = 1,000 Old Rubles).

The Absence of Russian Backlash II: Elections without Choices

The absence of Russian backlash has also been prevented by the methods of electoral engineering, which makes the election of candidates, outside Shaimiev's patronage networks unlikely. Without a history of free elections during the Soviet period, voters in post-Soviet Tatarstan have largely been passive, and directed by the Shaimiev leadership. A poll taken in November 1992 showed a very high degree of political apathy with some communist support due to market reforms, with insignificant support for ethnic Russian and Tatar nationalists. Ittifak received 1.8 percent, DPR 3.6 percent, VTOTs 4.1 percent, Communists 7.6 percent, while those with no sympathies to any of them polled 66.8 percent.⁹⁴ Despite this political apathy in Tatarstan, Tatarstan's leadership has been very successful in getting high levels of election turnouts (See Table A3.1.).

Tatarstan's electoral system enables the Republican leadership to arrange elections to their benefit. According to Tatarstan's electoral system, legislative elections are held in two types of electoral districts: territorial and administrative-territorial. The legislature's composition had been set at 130 members with 61 of them to be elected through the administrative-territorial precincts and 69 to be elected in the territorial precincts. Under Tatarstan's electoral system each voter casts two votes, one in a territorial district and one in an administrative-territorial district. This serves to ensure the election of heads of district and city governments to the parliament. Although Tatarstan's law states that electoral districts should be nearly equal in the number of voters, allowing for a 15 percent differential, the number of voters has been either above or below these legal limits in 114 of Tatarstan's 130 electoral districts. For example, Kazan (District no.1) had 813,396 voters, while Elabuz (District no.38) had only 7,623 in the 1995 Russian parliamentary elections. Consequently, rural voters (the ones who generally vote for the Republican authorities) are 2.4 times better represented in the Tatar parliament than urban voters.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Farid Kh. Mukhametshin, Aleksandr Lozovoi, *et. al.*, *Tatarstan: Na perekrestke mnenii*, Kazan: Izdanie Verkhovnogo Soveta Respubliki Tatarstan, 1993, p.47.

⁹⁵ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Izbratel'noe zakonodatel'stvo i vybory v Tatarstane: Opyt regional'nogo pravovogo separatizma', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, pp.11-14.

Apart from ‘special districts’ created for local administration heads, ‘special benefits’ are also stipulated in the law on elections. They include the right to be elected to two councils (in order to head ‘their own’ council again in addition to the post of chief). This right is granted only if one lives or works in the given administrative-territorial district, so that the ‘aliens’ will not get any hope of running for office. Moreover, in such districts, nobody is likely to run against the candidate supported by Shaimiev. The right to election without alternatives is also stipulated for administrative-territorial districts. Candidates in the territorial precincts could only run if they had given prior formal consent to give up their current occupation and become full-time members of parliament. In contrast, candidates in the administrative-territorial precincts could run even if they intended to keep their previous job upon election. It was in these precincts that heads of local governments ran and were elected.⁹⁶

Kimitaka Matsuzato thinks that the relationship between Shaimiev and the local administrators in Tatarstan’s districts is similar to the Spanish and Latin American *caciquismo* regime in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁹⁷ Matsuzato argues that Tatarstan’s political system can be conceptualised as a ‘centralized *caciquismo* in which rampant local boss politics is camouflaged by constitutional unitarism and by appointment systems of local chief executives.’⁹⁸ In this regime, for Matsuzato, the position of local chiefs depends on their electoral performance. However, Matsuzato’s argument that centralised *caciquismo* replaced ethno-bonapartism downplays the significance of Shaimiev’s uses of Tatar nationalism in running Tatarstan. Matsuzato wrongly assumes that local administrators justify themselves through their electoral ability. In fact, Shaimiev keeps them in their posts due to their loyalty to himself that ought to be demonstrated always. Thus, Shaimiev could need the loyalty of local administrators outside the election periods. Besides, as will be shown below, Shaimiev has been able to fix the results of elections anyway.

The electoral law’s requirement that a candidate must speak both Russian and Tatar also favours Shaimiev’s predominantly Tatar leadership against the ethnic Russians in

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.12.

⁹⁷ *Cacique* comes from the Caribbean Indian word for a chief.

Tatarstan, who have little knowledge of Tatar. In effect, this requirement has excluded a large group of people who only speak Russian. The Russian Supreme Court ruled that the law on electing deputies to the Republican legislature violated the Russian constitution because it allowed people working in the executive branch to hold seats in the legislature. The electoral law effectively violates the principle of the separation of powers. In violation of the Constitution, the heads of district administrations and mayors of cities are also nominated by the President. These heads of district administrations appoint the Chairperson and members of *izbirkomy* (the election commissions), which play an important role not only in registering candidates, but also in preventing observers from checking the voting lists.⁹⁹

Empowered by the electoral system, Tatarstan's leadership has generally been able to fix elections in accordance with its own calculations. In the March-April 1995 elections to Tatarstan's parliament, 466 candidates competed for 124 seats. In the first round 69 deputies were elected, 43 of whom were Tatarstan government officials or district administrators. 4 seats went to the communists, while the party of ethnic Russians in Tatarstan, *Ravnopravie i zakonnost'* and the party of Tatar ethnic nationalism, Ittifak, gained one seat each. When the composition of the new legislature was finalised in April 1995, the State Council was composed of 91 (73.4 percent) Tatar, 31 (25 percent) Russian deputies. Only two deputies (1.6 percent) were from other nationalities. In terms of their occupational background, 51 deputies were heads of districts and cities. Altogether, bureaucrats formed more than half of Tatarstan's parliamentarians. This is how Tatarstan came to have a 'bureaucratic parliament'.¹⁰⁰

These election results reconfigured the political forces in Tatarstan's parliament. After the elections in 1995, the Tatar parliament (State Council) was immediately restructured, and the old-guard bureaucrats and the heads of administration took the parliamentary seats of the oppositional deputies. Many laws adopted by the old Parliament were altered or cancelled, and new laws giving absolute authority and

⁹⁸ Kimitaka Matsuzato, 'From Ethno-Bonapartism to Centralized Caciquismo: Characteristics and Origins of the Tatarstan Political Regime, 1900–2000', *The Journal of Communist Studies & Transition Politics*, vol.17, no.4, 2001, p.43.

⁹⁹ Farukshin, *et.al.*, *Politicheskaya sistema Respubliki Tatarstan*, pp.86-90.

limitless power to the President were adopted. Even the Constitution endured numerous amendments; many articles were annulled and replaced by new ones. According to Article 108 of the Constitution, the President could not be re-elected more than twice, and his age could not exceed 65. The new Parliament abolished this article and adopted a new concept of unlimited, even life-long, tenure of the Presidency. In violation of Article 139 of the Tatarstan Constitution, no Constitutional Court has been set up for the Republic of Tatarstan.¹⁰¹

Following these changes in the parliament and the legal system of Tatarstan, it was very easy for Shaimiev to be re-elected as the President of the Republic. On 24 March 1996, Shaimiev was re-elected as Tatarstan's President for a second five-year term. Although Shaimiev publicly urged the opposition to field one or more candidates, three candidates failed to gather the 50,000 signatures needed for inclusion on the ballot. A fourth candidate, Ramil Gabdurakhmanov, a member of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and the manager of a vinegar factory in Kazan, collected enough signatures but he was jailed for two days for allegations against him. He was released when Aleksandr Salii had put the matter on the State Duma agenda. He withdrew his candidacy after his release, just before the registration deadline. As a result, Shaimiev ran unopposed, winning 97.1 percent of the vote. And despite the fact that there was only one candidate, turnout in the election was high at 77.9 percent (See Table A3.13).¹⁰² Concerning the turnout level in the Kaibitskii district, Derek S. Hutcheson noted that '11,722 of the 11,724 registered voters turned out - an amazing 99.98 per cent turnout.' Hutcheson ridicules these figures by saying that 'If it had been a competitive election, it is not unreasonable to assume that the turnout would have been at least 101 percent.'¹⁰³

Tatarstan's elections without choices have been made possible by using a loophole in Tatarstan's Electoral Law. According to federal legislation, all elections in the Russian

¹⁰⁰ *Vybory v Gosudarstvennyi Sovet Respubliki Tatarstan, 5 Marta 25 April 1995 g. Dokumenty, materialy, rezul'taty*, ed. M. A. Sigaev and N. V. Naryshkin, Kazan: Izd-vo Gosudarstvennyi Sovet Respubliki Tatarstan, 1995, p.291.

¹⁰¹ Aleksandr Vasil'ev, 'Tretii srok dlia Shaimieva', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.296.

¹⁰² John Löwenhardt, 'The 1996 Presidential Elections in Tatarstan', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, vol.13, no.1, 1997, p.138.

Federation must be competitive, which implies that at least two candidates should be registered for each contested office with the regional electoral commission. Otherwise, elections are null and void. However, Tatarstan's Constitution (Article 77) states that 'any number of candidates may be listed on an electoral ballot', which can mean only one candidate as well. Tatarstan's administrators naturally use this loophole.¹⁰⁴

Having established a strong control over the electoral system, Shaimiev does not have to worry about their results. For example, in the 28 March 1999 by-elections for 15 seats of the Tatarstan State Council, all of the seats were filled, as expected, by candidates supporting Shaimiev. Apart from twelve pro-Shaimiev local administration heads, the Head of Shaimiev's Presidential Administration and directors of two enterprises close to the Republican government were elected to Tatarstan's Parliament. These results essentially guarantee Shaimiev total control over the Republican legislature. Shaimiev commented that, 'The people are showing their faith in us and we shall govern in the interests of the people'.¹⁰⁵ He acquired the right to appoint deputies to the State Council. The new registration rules favoured parties and organisations loyal to the President. In July 1999, the State Council adopted amendments to the Constitution and the Election Law, which further strengthened the President's control over the Parliament. The Law abolished parliamentary elections on the basis of Party lists and legitimised the election of district administration heads as State Council Deputies.¹⁰⁶

The 19 December 1999 elections for Tatarstan's Parliament became another instance of Shaimiev's show of power. In these elections, the voters were to elect 122 of the 130 members of Tatarstan's parliament. The rest were already elected on 26 March, with six districts holding runoff elections on 8 April. Before the elections to the regional legislature, the newspaper *Vecherniaia Kazan*, published in its 1 December 1999 issue a list of 130 candidates whom the authorities wanted to elect to the parliament.¹⁰⁷ According to the final results, 109 of these individuals were actually elected to

¹⁰³ Derek S. Hutcheson, 'Postcard from Tatarstan', *Central Europe Review*, vol.2, no.25, 26 June 2000.

¹⁰⁴ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Izbratel'noe zakonodatel'stvo i vybory v Tatarstane: Opyt regional'nogo pravovogo separatizma', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.16.

¹⁰⁵ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Shaimiev Supporters Fill Out Tatarstan Legislature', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.4, no.12, 1 April 1999.

¹⁰⁶ *Izvestiia*, 22 July 1999.

Tatarstan's Parliament. Not surprisingly, three of these deputies were Shaimiev nephews.¹⁰⁸

Comparisons with Bashkortostan, Chuvashiia and Kazakhstan

Shaimiev's politics of nationalism in Tatarstan could be compared to the politics of nationalism by the post-Soviet leaderships of the non-Russian republics of Bashkortostan and Chuvashiia and the independent state of Kazakhstan. These republics have large Turkic and Russian communities. Moreover, they have been ruled by authoritarian leaders advocating the continuity of Soviet-era privileges of their titular nationalities.

Bashkortostan is located to the Southeast of Tatarstan. Unlike the Tatars, the Bashkirs are not the most numerous nationality in their titular republic. There are more Russians (39.3 percent) and Tatars (28.5 percent) than Bashkirs (21.9 percent) in Bashkortostan. This shows that the demographic conditions of Bashkortostan's leadership were less favourable than those of Tatarstan's leadership for a pragmatic politics of Bashkir nationalism in the post-Soviet era. However, both Moscow and the Russians in Bashkortostan favour Bashkirisation to Tatarisation. This makes it easier for Bashkortostan's leadership to pursue its pragmatic politics of Bashkir nationalism. Resembling Tatarstan, however, the republic's economy is based on oil extraction and refining and heavy industry. This formed the economic motives of Bashkortostan's leadership in promoting their version of Bashkir nationalism.

The Soviet-era Bashkir autonomy formed the basis of the Bashkir declaration of sovereignty. Bashkortostan's sovereignty declaration guaranteed equal rights to all ethnic groups as well as 'realising the inalienable right of the Bashkir nation to self-determination'. Moreover, Bashkortostan's constitution states that the republic's existence was a result of the Bashkir ethnic group exercising its right to self-determination (Article 69) and emphasises that the republic was responsible for the

¹⁰⁷ *Vecherniaia Kazan*, 1 December 1999.

¹⁰⁸ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Tatarstan President Knows Who His Deputies Will Be', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.4, no.47, 14 December 1999.

preservation and development of Bashkir culture (Article 53).¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, Bashkortostan's language law of 1998 accorded Bashkir and Russian equal status without granting Tatar an official language status.

Bashkortostan's legal framework served to boost the socio-economic opportunities of the Bashkirs in Bashkortostan. Similar to Tatarstan, Bashkortostan favours Bashkirs in top government positions. Bashkortostan's laws require candidates for the Presidency to know the Bashkir language. According to Valerii Stepanov, 67.5 percent of Bashkortostan's Cabinet of Ministers and 58.5 percent of the republican local administrators were Bashkir in 1997, while the ethnic Russians in Bashkortostan occupy only 19 and 15 percents of these positions respectively despite the fact that they form the largest ethnic group in the republic (39.3 percent).¹¹⁰

Just like Shaimiev, Bashkortostan's post-Soviet President Murtaza Rakhimov rapidly consolidated his authority in the republic through his politics of nationalism. Rakhimov's hold on power was further strengthened after the election of a compliant legislature in 1995. The legislative organ of Bashkortostan is the *Kurultai*, which is made of two houses: the Legislative House (34 deputies on a permanent basis) and the House of Representatives (146 deputies who have the opportunity to combine their work with duties in the executive system of power). Rakhimov managed to have himself re-elected in 1998 after refusing to put on the ballot two opposition candidates despite the fact that the Supreme Court in Moscow had declared them legitimate. Consequently, he won a two-man fight against a straw candidate, who happened to be his own minister of forestry. Just like Tatarstan's electoral districts, Bashkortostan's electoral districts coincide with administrative districts. This means that sparsely populated rural districts, where the population is predominantly non-Russian, have significantly greater representation in legislative bodies than more densely populated city districts. Although Russians make up 57 percent of the population in Ufa, they run only three of the seven city districts.¹¹¹ There is no strong criticism of Rakhimov's policy partly because

¹⁰⁹ *Konstitutsiia Respubliki Bashkortostana*, Ufa: Bashkortostan, 1995.

¹¹⁰ Valerii Stepanov, 'Ethnic Tensions and Separatism in Russia', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol.26, no.2, 2000, p.312.

¹¹¹ Henry E. Hale, 'Machine Politics and Institutionalised Electorates: A Comparative Analysis of Six Duma Elections in Bashkortostan', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, vol.15, no.4, 1999, pp.102-104.

opposition newspapers have no chance of being printed by the state-owned printing presses. The authorities in Bashkortostan are harassing local journalists who write about corruption and nationalism among state officials. *Vechernii Neftekamsk* editor Eduard Khusnutdinov has fled fearing that he would be arrested for insulting the President, when his paper reported on corruption in the oil industry and local trade.¹¹²

Another republic that shows similarities with Tatarstan is Chuvashia, which is located to the Northwest of Tatarstan. The Chuvash people are Turkic and predominantly Orthodox Christian. Ethnically, they are very close to the Tatars and the Bashirs. According to the 1989 census, ethnic Chuvash formed 68 percent of the republican population while 26 percent were ethnic Russians. The closeness of the Chuvash and Russian cultures and the lack of a religious divide between the Russians and the Chuvash people makes the politics of nationalism a less attractive option for the Chuvash leadership. Besides, unlike Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, the republic's economy is predominantly agricultural, with little industry and no significant natural resources. These factors have undermined the significance of the politics of nationalism in Chuvashia.

Although the Chuvash sovereignty declaration begins by stating that it is expressing the interests of all citizens of the republic regardless of ethnicity, it also states that it is 'taking responsibility for the fate of the Chuvash nation' and 'proceeding from the necessity of preserving and developing the culture, language, traditions and way of life of the Chuvash nation'.¹¹³ Furthermore, the Chuvash language law declares both Chuvash and Russian to be state languages. It also calls for unspecified financial bonuses to be given to those workers who are able to communicate in both languages (Article 3).¹¹⁴ The Chuvash government started to implement the language law by adopting a programme in May 1993. As in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, this programme explicitly gives priority to expanding the functions of the Chuvash language, including compiling a list of professions and positions which would require the knowledge of Chuvash language knowledge (Article 1), and giving priority to Chuvash-language publishing, university education and radio broadcasting (Articles 3, 4, 5 and 6).

¹¹² Robert Orttung, 'Bashkortostan Cracks Down on Investigative Journalists', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.1, no.14, 27 November 1996.

¹¹³ Gorenburg, 'Regional Separatism in Russia', p.265.

¹¹⁴ 'Zakon o iazykakh Respubliki Chuvashiia', *Sovetskaia Chuvashiia*, 27 October 1990.

Furthermore, the Chuvash people have been given privileges in the republican administration. Nikolai Fedorov, the former Minister of Justice of the Russian Federation, became Head of the Republic in December 1993. He sought to control the extremist forms of nationalism in the republic. Chuvashia's post-Soviet administration under Nikolai Fedorov included only two non-Chuvash in its 13-person Cabinet of Ministers.¹¹⁵ Fedorov became President again in the first round of the December 1997 Presidential elections by getting 58 percent of the vote. This time, the republic's mass media were mobilised to shore up Fedorov's image. Fedorov's success in his re-election is also helped by the fact that Chuvashia's constitution requires that the President speak both government languages.¹¹⁶

Tatarstan's post-Soviet political experience can also be compared to Kazakhstan, which is an independent post-Soviet state. The existence of an independent state in Kazakhstan gives the republican leadership more institutional resources to play a pragmatic politics of Kazakh nationalism. Both Tatarstan and Kazakhstan have two major ethnic groups of roughly equal size; Russians and the titular nationality. Partly due to President Nursultan Nazarbaev's pragmatic politics of Kazakh nationalism, the ratio of ethnic Kazakhs in Kazakhstan's population of roughly 17 million increased from 39.7 percent in 1989 to 46 percent in 1995 while the proportion of Russians decreased from 37.8 percent to 33 percent in the same period.¹¹⁷ Besides, Kazakhstan's rich oil reserves makes it comparable to Tatarstan and Bashkortostan in terms of the desire of the republican leadership for using nationalism to gain the control of republican oil revenues.

The effects of Nazarbaev's pragmatic politics of Kazakh nationalism could be identified in various dimensions of Kazakhstan's politics. Nazarbaev's idea of multinational Kazakhstan enables him to play the role of inter-ethnic mediator in the republic. The only nationalist group Nazarbaev's regime has actively suppressed is the Alash party of Kazakh ethnic nationalism. Despite this rhetoric of multinationalism, Kazakhstan's Supreme Soviet made Kazakh the state language in August 1989. The

¹¹⁵ Vasilii Filippov, *Etnopoliticheskaia situatsiia v Chuvashii*, Moscow: IEA RAN, 1994, p.5.

¹¹⁶ Rashid Akhmetov, 'Presidential Elections in Chuvashia - Martial Arts, Eastern-Style', *Jamestown Foundation Prism*, 20 February 1998.

'State Program for Development of the Kazakh Language', approved in 1990, required the translation of the entire body of office regulations and documentation into the Kazakh language by 1994. Following the implementation of this programme, Kazakhs made up more than 74 percent of the highest levels of the state administration, while non-Kazakh workers made up 75.8 percent of the total workforce of the country in 1995. Moreover, the parliament that Nazarbaev dissolved in 1995 had 103 ethnic-Kazakh deputies as compared to just 49 Russians.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, in its programme of privatisation, Kazakhstan issued vouchers to certified Kazakh citizens in order to assure that the enterprises would remain in Kazakh hands, since managers and urban workers were disproportionately non-Kazakh.¹¹⁹ This caused a great deal of dissatisfaction among Russian and other non-Kazakh groups, particularly in the northern parts of Kazakhstan where the Kazakhs formed a minority. To appease the Russians, the Constitution of 1995 removed the phrase defining Kazakhstan as 'the form of statehood of the self-determining Kazak nation' and elevated Russian to the status of an official language, although Kazak has remained as a state language. The 1995 constitution also gave the President the power to appoint all ministers (except the Prime Minister) without the parliament's assent, dissolve parliament in case of 'severe disagreements', and issue decrees in the force of law.¹²⁰

This comparative analysis demonstrates that Kazakhstan's post-Soviet leadership has promoted the most energetic form of *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* to be followed by the leaderships of Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Chuvashia. The control of the state machinery by these leaders forms the main source of their strength while the control of the oil revenue constitutes their main objective, with the exception of the leadership of Chuvashia, whose economy is basically agrarian. As the Chuvash case shows, the numerical superiority of the titular nationality is not enough to play the ethnic card effectively. The ethnic card can be used effectively for political

¹¹⁷ Edward Schatz, 'The Politics of Multiple Identities: Lineage and Ethnicity in Kazakhstan', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.52, no.3, 2000, p.489.

¹¹⁸ Azamat Sarsembayev, 'Imagined Communities: Kazak Nationalism and Kazakification in the 1990s', *Central Asian Survey*, vol.18, no.3, 1999, p.336.

¹¹⁹ Martha Brill Olcott, 'Democratization and the Growth of Political Participation in Kazakhstan', in *Conflict, Cleavage, and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, ed. Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p.218.

¹²⁰ *Konstitutsiia Respubliki Kazakhstana*, Almaty, Zheti Zharghy, 1996.

purposes in bi-national societies when the politicians in power manipulate the potential danger of interethnic violence in order to force the majority of the population to remain loyal to their 'centrist' presidents.

Conclusions

To conclude, the evidence provided in this chapter shows that the post-Soviet leadership of Tatarstan has used *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* in order to secure their political survival. During the Soviet era, the leadership of the TASSR had a national territory, but not the power to rule in this territory. The leadership of post-Soviet Tatarstan gained some power out of the power vacuum that emerged in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse to rule 'their' republic. Shaimiev and his entourage reacted to the new environment by using the Soviet-era regional mechanisms of rule that they knew and understood. This entailed their taking control of resources, administering them on behalf of the population, and benefiting from the process. However, Tatarstan's leadership has been drawing on the Soviet institutional legacy not to defend socialism, but to secure their political survival under the post-Soviet conditions.

In his search for a new source of legitimacy in the post-Soviet era, Shaimiev turned to the politics of nationalism in a manner that is very similar to the Soviet-era discourse of the 'friendship of nations'. Shaimiev has stayed on top by promoting neither the civic nationalism of participating citizens in Tatarstan nor the ethnic nationalism of the Tatar nation bound together by common culture and history, but *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* which demands national autonomy for the Tatars as the only formula for securing regional stability against ethnic nationalisms of the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan. This involved the use of the major political forces of the republic against each other. Shaimiev has not only checked nationalist extremism, but has also managed to defuse much of the political opposition. His tactic was to absorb the opposition's most popular slogans -including sovereignty itself- into his platform. Shaimiev has often put opponents' ideas into action. After all, it is always a good idea to foster constructive criticism. Consequently, these strategies have been so successful that Shaimiev's opposition has been squeezed almost entirely out of Tatarstan's parliament.

The Tatarisation of the governing positions of Tatarstan elicited no significant backlash from the ethnic Russian people of Tatarstan for two reasons. The first is the existence of personalistic patronage networks and the second is the engineering of elections. The patronage networks resulted in the elimination of checks on Tatarstan's leadership. Shaimiev derives his power not from a political party but from his personal contacts in the state. In this sense, Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership has displayed a rent-seeking behaviour. It still is in Shaimiev's personal and family interests to manipulate their positions for privatising the oil industry, and to keep all power concentrated in his own hands. Shaimiev has the authority to issue decrees, which have force of law. He has the right to appoint and dismiss the ministers. Likewise, there is no constraint of the legislature and courts on his executions since both legislatures and courts are far from being independent. This chapter has also shown that Shaimiev uses stability as a pretext for authoritarianism and 'gradual democratisation'. Although Shaimiev appears to support the establishment of opposition parties, his discourse of 'constructive opposition' reveals that what he wants is an opposition that does not 'oppose'. In Tatarstan, the laws are so vague that they can provide legal bases necessary to close any organisation that authorities dislike. Mass media is under strict government control, and censorship is very tight.

Another factor that makes any Russian backlash very difficult is Shaimiev's engineering of elections. In fact, Tatarstan's authorities have consistently rigged elections in Tatarstan through taking administrative measures to mobilise the electorates behind their candidates. This is similar to the Communist Party control of the electorate under the Soviet rule. The elections are not only non-competitive, their rules are also subject to change. Besides the limitations on citizens to influence government policies, citizens do not seem to be pressing for political freedoms. Just like Shaimiev's regime in Tatarstan, post-Soviet regimes in Bashkortostan, Chuvashii and Kazakhstan have also pursued their own politics of nationalism in order to secure their political survival.

The next chapter will explore why and how Moscow accommodated Tatarstan's post-Soviet rulers and their politics of Tatar nationalism. In order to do so, Chapter Three will focus on the strengths and weaknesses of both Moscow and Tatarstan in the post-Soviet era.

3. Kazan and Moscow: The Clash of Two Kremlins

In this chapter, we will explore Shaimiev's politics of nationalism in terms of its role in enabling Tatarstan's leadership to gain greater autonomy from Moscow. I will also examine the development of the policies and attitudes of the El'tsin regime towards Tatarstan between 1992 and 1999. This analysis could explain the absence of a backlash from the El'tsin administration to the Shaimiev leadership's policies of maintaining political power and gaining economic wealth.

When the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, the majority of the Tatars seemed to be united against Moscow. However, the 'seemingly united' Tatars had their own internal struggles for power. In opposition to the confrontational strategy of Tatar ethnic nationalist organisations, such as VTOTs and Ittifak, against Moscow, Tatarstan's leadership sought to manipulate the post-Soviet weakness of Moscow to secure its political survival in the Republic. Thus, Shaimiev pragmatically opted for negotiating with Moscow over the status of Tatarstan in 1992. These negotiations resulted in the signing of the Power-Sharing Treaty between Russia and Tatarstan on 15 February 1994. The Tatar leadership has hailed this Treaty, which granted so many privileges to Tatarstan, as the basis of Tatarstan's stability and a cure for ethnic nationalism in the Republic.

The views of Tatarstan's leadership about its relations with Moscow have been largely taken for granted in the literature on Tatarstan's relations with Moscow and the Tatar ethnic nationalists in Tatarstan. For example, Alexei Zverev argued that Tatarstan's Treaty with Moscow has effectively marginalized the entire forms of Tatar nationalism in Tatarstan's political scene. According to this line of thinking, Mintimer Shaimiev manipulated ethnic nationalists to obtain specific concessions from Moscow. Moreover, having secured his objectives with the signing of the treaty, Shaimiev's priority in the

post-1994 period, for these scholars, became one of suppressing the Tatar ethnic nationalists who accuse him of compromising Tatar national sovereignty.¹

The chapter argues that Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* has been one of the defining characteristics of his regime both before and after the signing of the Power-Sharing Treaty in 1994. In other words, Shaimiev has not pursued his pragmatic politics of Tatar nationalism temporarily until gaining some concessions from Moscow. Instead of siding with Moscow to suppress all forms of Tatar nationalism in the post-Treaty era, Shaimiev has indeed pitted Moscow and the Tatar ethnic nationalists against each other. This enabled Shaimiev to promote his politics of Tatar nationalism as the one and only way of securing political stability and interethnic peace in Tatarstan. Shaimiev's policies have contributed to the political survival of Tatarstan's leadership since Moscow supported the Shaimiev regime in order to contain the spread of Tatar ethnic nationalism. Besides, Shaimiev also succeeded in gaining more concessions from Moscow in exchange for Tatarstan's electoral support for the El'tsin regime during the Russian Presidential and Parliamentary elections. Nevertheless, these concessions have not prevented the Shaimiev leadership from promoting its own version of Tatar nationalism. When the relations between Moscow and Tatarstan became tense, as was the case between 1997 and 1998, Shaimiev started to politicise the national problems of the Tatars in order to pressurise Moscow into accommodating the interests of Tatarstan's leadership.

The chapter begins by mapping out the negotiating positions of Moscow and Tatarstan's leadership concerning the status of Tatarstan in the post-Soviet era. Afterwards, we will explore how the Treaty with Moscow was finally negotiated. Next, the chapter will analyse what this Treaty says, and the reactions of the Russians and the Tatars to the Treaty. In the following section, Tatarstan's Treaty will be compared to the successes and failures of the non-Russian republics of Bashkortostan and Sakha as well as the Russian Sverdlovsk region in their own power-sharing treaties with Moscow. Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism in the post-Treaty period will be explored by looking at Tatarstan's politics of electoral support for the El'tsin regime, Tatar diaspora and foreign economic relations. Furthermore, the worsening of relations between Moscow and Tatarstan

¹ Alexei Zverev, 'Qualified Sovereignty: The Tatarstan Model for Resolving Conflicting Loyalties', in *Conflicting Loyalties and the State in Post-Soviet Russia and Eurasia*, eds. Michael Waller, Bruno Coppieters, and Aleksei V. Malashenko, London: Frank Cass, 1998, p.139.

between 1997 and 1998 will be explored by discussing Moscow's economic policies of controlling Tatarstan and Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism. In the final section, the impact of Russia's 1998 financial crisis on Tatarstan will be explored in terms of Tatarstan's capacity to play a greater role in shaping the future of the Russian Federation both in economic and political spheres.

Renegotiating the Imperial Relationship between Two Kremlins

The Kremlin in Moscow, which represents the centre of Russian political activity, is not the only Kremlin in Russia. There is also a Kremlin in Tatarstan's capital city Kazan, representing Tatarstan's claims for sovereignty. During the Tsarist and Soviet periods, Moscow's Kremlin had been able to keep Tatarstan under its control. In the post-Soviet period, however, the Kremlin in Kazan challenged the authority of Moscow's Kremlin over Tatarstan, as the collapse of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1991 deprived Moscow of the main instrument of its imperial control over Tatarstan.² It was in this context that Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism enabled Tatarstan's leadership to renegotiate the terms of its subordination to Moscow.

In the post-Soviet era, Russia's state power weakened enormously due partly to the fact that Russia's political elite was divided over the character of the new Russian state. In the absence of mass based parties or social movements, El'tsin concentrated on building a vertical system of Presidential power through the appointment of loyalists. Instead of using the Democratic Russia movement for building a broad social support for his reforms at the grassroots, El'tsin relied on his close advisors. His flexibility helped him to manoeuvre on the highly polarised Russian political scene.³ Consequently, Russia's post-Soviet leadership rushed to gain economic wealth by using its political power. Instead of mobilising an anti-regime socialist or fascist movement, El'tsin's anti-revolutionary revolution generated a vicious cycle of uncertainty and instability.⁴ Not surprisingly, as

² Yuri Zarakhovich 'A Clash of Kremlins', *Time*, 14 December 1998, p.27.

³ Liliia F. Shevtsova, 'Russia's Post-Communist Politics: Revolution or Continuity?', in *The New Russia: Troubled Transformation*. ed. Gail W. Lapidus, Boulder, CO: Westview. 1995. pp.5-6.

⁴ Stephen E. Hanson, 'The Dilemmas of Russia's Anti-Revolutionary Revolution', *Current History*, vol.100, no.648, 2001, p.332.

James Hughes argued, Russia's post-Soviet transition came to be characterised by intra-elite conflicts, pervasive corruption and rent seeking behaviour.⁵

The post-Soviet weakness of Russian state institutions caused confusion in formulating Moscow's policy towards Tatarstan. In fact, the executive (the Presidency and the Council of Ministers) and legislative (the Congress of People's Deputies) organs of the Russian Federation were in conflict with each other even over the nature of the political regime in the Russian Federation. While the executive branch advocated a Presidential system, the legislature was in favour of a parliamentary system.⁶ The power vacuum emerging out of this conflict provided the bureaucrats in the State Committee for Nationalities Affairs with the opportunity to determine Moscow's policy towards Tatarstan. The first Head of the Russian State Committee for Nationalities Affairs Ramazan Abdulatipov argued that Moscow could accommodate Tatarstan's leadership by granting some autonomy for Tatarstan. For Abdulatipov, it was Tatar ethnic nationalists, rather than Tatarstan's leadership, who had a real interest in seceding from the Russian Federation.⁷ In opposition to Abdulatipov's accommodative stance, Valerii Tishkov, who became the Head of the State Committee for Nationalities Affairs on 3 March 1992, argued that Tatarstan's leadership promoted Tatar ethnic nationalism against Moscow.⁸ Thus, for Tishkov, instead of accommodating Tatarstan's leadership, Moscow should promote a civic conception of Russian national identity among non-Russian, including Tatar, masses. According to Tishkov, all citizens of Russia should enjoy the privileges of Russian nationality, irrespective of their ethnic background. For Tishkov, along with maintaining the Soviet-era ethnic republics, Moscow should also promote national-cultural autonomy.⁹

These institutional and policy divisions within the federal political leadership gave Tatarstan's leadership a golden opportunity to enlarge their privileges and autonomy.

⁵ James Hughes, 'Transition Models and Democratisation in Russia', in *Russia after the Cold War*, eds. Mike Bowker and Cameron Ross, London: Longman, 1999, p.25.

⁶ For the conflict between the Russian presidency and parliament, see Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge, 1996, pp.139-142.

⁷ Ramazan G. Abdulatipov, *O federativnoi i natsional'noi politike Rossiiskogo gosudarstva*, Moscow: Slavianskii dialog, 1995, pp.4-11.

⁸ Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, (hereafter, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict*), London: Sage, 1997, p.256.

⁹ Valerii A. Tishkov, 'Kontseptual'naia evoliutsiia natsional'noi politiki v Rossii', *Federalizm*, vol.2, no.3, 1997, pp.71-108.

Unlike the federal leadership, Tatarstan's leaders had a united position towards Moscow. As explained in the second chapter, a Presidential system had already been adopted in Tatarstan, with the associates of Shaimiev controlling the local Council of Ministers and the Parliament (Supreme Soviet). However, the main challenge for Tatarstan's leadership came from the collapse of the Soviet Union, which made it impossible for Tatarstan to achieve its original objective of achieving equality with the RSFSR through an institutional reform in the USSR. Thus, Tatarstan's leadership started to demand 'an associated membership in the Russian Federation on the basis of a bilateral treaty' rather than 'a union republic status in the USSR that was separate from Russia'.¹⁰ Moreover, Tatarstan's leadership realised the need to distance themselves from Tatar ethnic nationalists, whose secessionist discourse could minimise their chances of negotiating a favourable bilateral treaty.

Shaimiev's advisors Rafael Khakimov and Indus Tagirov played an active role in formulating Tatarstan's policy towards Moscow. Shaimiev's Chief Advisor Rafael Khakimov based Tatarstan's negotiating position on the ethnic distinctiveness of the Tatars. His following argument contradicts Tishkov's position, while clearly in line with Abdulatipov's line on the nationalities question:

Sometimes one can hear appeals to forget about ethnic origin and not to divide people according to this category. These appeals derived from the misunderstanding of the phenomenon. Ethnic features are not just wishful thinking, nor a devil's plot on the part of 'separatists'; they are destined from birth.¹¹

Indus Tagirov, who is Shaimiev's advisor on the nationalities question and the Tatar diaspora legitimated Tatarstan's policy of negotiating with Moscow over the status of the republic, rather than fighting for independence from Moscow, which was demanded by Tatar ethnic nationalists. During my interview with him, Tagirov argued that Tatarstan's leadership had the 'responsibility' of promoting the interests of Tatar diaspora in various parts of Russia. This required Tatarstan, for Tagirov, to establish at least a confederal relationship with Moscow. Tagirov said that:

¹⁰ Radik Batyrshin, 'Mintimer Shaimiev - za assotsiatsiiu s Rossiei', *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 26 June 1992.

¹¹ Rafael S. Khakimov, *Sumerki imperii. K voprosu o natsii i gosudarstve*, Kazan, Tatknizdat, 1993, p.19.

The Tatars mainly live outside rather than inside Tatarstan. Most of the Tatar diaspora live in the Russian Federation. Because of its responsibility for promoting the rights, not only of Tatarstan's people, but also of the Tatars in Russia, Tatarstan should maintain working relations with Moscow. Therefore, the interests of all Tatars in the foreseeable future lie in forming a confederal type of relationship between Tatarstan and Moscow.¹²

During the negotiations, Boris El'tsin and Egor Gaidar headed the Russian negotiating team (Viktor Chernomyrdin replaced Gaidar in December 1992). Gennadii Burbulis, Secretary of the Presidential Administration, was the key person at the technical level of these negotiations. His aides were two advisors to the Russian President (Sergei Stankevich and Aleksandr Granberg). Oleg Lobov and Sergei Shakhrai served in the team as Deputy Prime Ministers. Other members of the team included representatives from the Presidential Administration (Boris Milroshin and Iurii Voronin), Supreme Soviet (Iurii Iarov), and Ministries of Nationalities (Ramazan Abdulatipov and Valerii Tishkov), Defence (Valerii Mironov), Internal Affairs (Vitalii Turbin), Finance (Boris Fedorov) and Economy (Magomed Iussupov).

Tatarstan's President Mintimer Shaimiev and Prime Minister Mukhammat Sabirov headed the Republican negotiating team. At the technical level of these negotiations Deputy Prime Minister Filzia Khamidullin and Deputy Chairperson of the Supreme Soviet, Farid Mukhametshin served as the key negotiators of Tatarstan. They were aided by two advisors to the Tatarstan President (Rafael Khakimov and Indus Tagirov). Other members of the team included Vice President Vasilii Likhachev, Deputy Prime Minister Farid Gazizullin, Deputy Chairperson of the Supreme Soviet Zilia Valeeva, Ministries of Foreign Economic Relations (Shaukat Arslanov), Finance (Dmitrii Nagumanov), Justice (Al'bert Salabaev), and the following heads of the standing committees of the Supreme Soviet; Gelii Kobelev, Aleksei Kolesnik, Rustem Khafizov and Fandas Safiullin.

The negotiations over the status of Tatarstan yielded their first results on 22 January 1992, when Russia's acting Prime Minister Egor Gaidar and Tatarstan's Prime Minister Mukhammat Sabirov signed an intergovernmental agreement on economic co-operation. Although the agreement recognised Tatarstan's claim to the ownership of land and

natural resources on its territory, it divided the ownership of Tatarstan's enterprises between Tatarstan and Moscow. It did not, however, specify exactly which enterprise belonged to which government and in which proportion. The exception was the oil industry, which was given to Tatarstan. Russia was to receive its share of oil through 'mutually beneficial annual agreements'. The two governments also specified that export quotas for Tatarstan would be agreed to on a yearly basis. Finally, Kazan and Moscow agreed to provide financial support to Tatarstan's enterprises.¹³

Tatar Referendum and Constitution

In order to consolidate its position throughout the Russian Federation, the El'tsin regime started to pressurise Tatarstan into endorsing the Federation Treaty in March 1992. For this purpose, the Russian Ministry of Interior ordered that all heavy weapons in the possession of the local militia were removed from Tatarstan. In this way, Moscow implied that it could use military instruments to subdue the rebellious politicians in Tatarstan.¹⁴ Despite the pressure, the Tatarstan leadership sought to hold a referendum on Tatarstan's political status, when Tatarstan's parliament reaffirmed its intention to proceed with the referendum on 16 March 1992. The language of referendum, however, was the subject of heated debate. Radicals, led by the parliamentary faction *Suverenitet*, demanded a straightforward vote on independence, while federalists, led by the pro-Russian faction *Narodovlastie*, were opposed to any referendum at all. Eventually, a compromise wording was proposed by Shaimiev as: 'Do you agree that the Republic of Tatarstan is a sovereign state, the subject of international law, forming its relations with the Russian Federation, other Republics and states on the basis of equal agreements?'¹⁵

The referendum proceeded peacefully on 21 March 1992. According to the referendum results, 61.4 percent of the voters approved the government's proposal against 37.2

¹² My interview with Prof. Indus R. Tagirov, Chairperson of the World Congress of Tatars, Kazan, 3 June 1998.

¹³ *Belaia kniga Tatarstana. Put' k suverenitetu 1990-1995 (Sbornik dokumentov)*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1995, pp.34-37.

¹⁴ *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 7 March 1992.

¹⁵ *Moscow News*, 25 March 1992.

percent of the voters (See Table A3.5).¹⁶ Equally important, the turnout was very high at 81.7 percent, meaning that over half of eligible voters approved the initiative. The support for the referendum was higher in predominantly rural areas (75.3 percent), while in urban areas, where there were higher concentrations of Russians, only 58.7 percent voted 'yes'. In particular, 51.2 percent of the electorate in Kazan voted 'no'. These results strengthened the position of the Republican leadership vis-à-vis both Russian and Tatar ethnic nationalists. The conduct of the referendum with the participation of international observers contributed to the legitimacy of the referendum, which deprived Moscow of one of the valuable arguments that could have been used against the Republican leadership.¹⁷

The referendum results strengthened the position of Tatarstan's leadership vis-à-vis its opponents in the Republic and Moscow. Shaimiev rejected the position of the chairperson of the VTOTs, Marat Muliukov, who asserted that Tatarstan was 'an independent state that deserved international diplomatic recognition'.¹⁸ For Shaimiev, Tatarstan should not break its centuries-old economic and cultural links to Russia. After the release of referendum results, Moscow was also speaking from a weak position. For example, Burbulis simply suggested that the Federal Treaty of March 1992 should be integrated into the new treaty with Tatarstan in order to assert Russia's sovereign rights over Tatarstan. However, strengthened by the referendum, Tatarstan's Supreme Soviet claimed 'fiscal sovereignty' of Tatarstan through the adoption of a law on a single-channel tax system on 21 May 1992. Relying on this law, Tatarstan stopped virtually all payments to the federal treasury.¹⁹

Having established the legal and fiscal bases of Tatarstan's autonomy from Moscow, Tatarstan's leadership also sought to increase its autonomy from the Russians and the Tatars in the Republic. For this purpose, in May and June 1992, he sponsored two Congresses: the 'Congress of the Peoples of Tatarstan' (for gaining autonomy from the Russian ethnic nationalists) and the World Tatar Congress (for gaining autonomy from

¹⁶ *Izvestiia*, 23 March 1992.

¹⁷ For the report of observers from the United States see, The US Commission on CSCE, *Report on the Tatar Referendum on Sovereignty*, 14 April 1992, Washington, DC, 1992.

¹⁸ *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 24 March 1992.

the Tatar ethnic nationalists). Concerning the non-Tatar ethnic groups in Tatarstan, Shaimiev convened the 'Congress of the Peoples of Tatarstan', which was attended by the representatives of all ethnic groups of Tatarstan between 23-24 May 1992. The Congress reaffirmed Tatarstan's sovereignty, identified the Republic's 'multinational people' as the bearers of that sovereignty, and asserted that stability in the Republic would have to be based on the constitution and laws of the Republic. The Congress also passed a resolution calling for the promotion of interethnic trust and civil harmony in Tatarstan. During his speech at this Congress, Shaimiev praised the multinational character of Tatarstan as follows:

By virtue of its geopolitical location, Tatarstan and its capital, Kazan, have played the role of a connecting link between West and East. They have been a meeting place of different civilisations, cultures, and confessions. Having lived together for centuries, people have worked out their own form of multinational intercourse that has facilitated, and still facilitates, the mutual enrichment of languages and cultures and deep traditions of understanding and co-operation.²⁰

It should be noted that although Shaimiev's discourse of the multinational people of Tatarstan differentiates him from Tatar ethnic nationalists, it does not establish a basis for civic Tatar nationalism that is inclusive towards non-Tatar peoples of the Republic. This discourse, in fact, increases the autonomy of the Shaimiev leadership from the Tatar and non-Tatar peoples of Tatarstan since it positions the Shaimiev leadership as the sole guardian of interethnic peace in the Republic.

Concerning the Tatar ethnic nationalists, Shaimiev convened the World Congress of Tatars (*Vsemirnyi Kongress Tatar* – WCT) with more than a thousand participants including the members of the Tatar Diaspora in 19-21 June 1992. WCT supported the state sovereignty of Tatarstan. The Congress undermined the claims of the all-Tatar Kurultai of Tatar ethnic nationalists, which met in February 1992, over the national agenda of the Tatars. Meanwhile, in this meeting of WCT, Tatar Public Centre (TOTs) was renamed as All-Tatar Public Centre (VTOTs).²¹

¹⁹ Edward W. Walker, 'Negotiating Autonomy: Tatarstan, Asymmetrical Federalism and State Consolidation in Russia', in *Separatism: Democracy and Disintegration*, ed. Metta Spencer, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998, p.239.

²⁰ *Materialy S'ezda Narodov Tatarstana*, Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1992, p.8.

²¹ *Boten Dunia Tatar Kongressy. Berenche chakirylysh*, Kazan: Tatar Ministr Kabinety, 1992.

Reflecting the growing self-confidence of Tatarstan's leadership, the Republican negotiators submitted its draft of the Treaty to the Russian negotiators on 15 August 1992. Implying a confederal framework for the relations between Tatarstan and Moscow, the draft defined the Republic of Tatarstan as a sovereign state, 'which independently executes all state powers'. According to the draft, Tatarstan also reserved the right to have an independent foreign policy and foreign economic relations, to establish its own military service and to distribute the Russian Federation's military units within Tatarstan.²² When El'tsin and Shaimiev finally met on 15 September 1992, the Presidents did not endorse Tatarstan's draft of the Treaty due to their disagreements over Tatarstan's legal status, its obligations to the federal budget and the service obligations of Tatarstan's citizens in the Russian military.

Disappointed with the draft of the Treaty, Moscow started to take a hard-liner stance towards Tatarstan. Replacing Valerii Tishkov, Sergei Shakhrai, an ethnic Cossack, became the chairperson of the State Committee on Nationalities Policy on 19 October 1992. For Shakhrai, the main cause of the conflict between Tatarstan and Moscow was neither ethnicity nor the 'tragic errors of the past', but the discord among the authorities in Moscow.²³ He sought to reorient his Ministry's work away from searching for 'some abstract nationalities policy' to developing concrete measures to implement the Federation Treaty of 1992. Underlying Shakhrai's approach were the emphasis on preserving the integrity of the federation, heeding the interests of Russians throughout the federation, and stressing the primacy of the individual human rights of all citizens. Thus, when Shakhrai became also the Head of Russian team during negotiations with Tatarstan, he insisted that all 'elements of confederation' in the draft of the Treaty be replaced with the principles of Russia's Federation Treaty of March 1992.

The Tatarstan side responded to the hard-line position of Moscow in kind when Tatarstan's Supreme Soviet ratified Tatarstan's Constitution on 6 November 1992. The constitution reaffirmed many of the principles expressed in the 1990 Sovereignty Declaration. Article 1 asserted that 'state sovereignty is an inalienable attribute of the

²² 'Proekt dogovora o vzaimnom delegirovanii (peredache) predmetov vedeniia i polnomochii gosudarstvennoi vlasti' in *Belaia kniga Tatarstana. Put' k suverenitetu 1990-1995 (Sbornik dokumentov)*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1995, pp.43-49.

²³ *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 9 November 1993.

Republic of Tatarstan'. While article 59 stated that the laws of the Republic 'are supreme over all its territory if they do not contradict the international obligations' of the Republic, article 61 affirmed that the republic 'is a sovereign state and a subject of international law that is associated with the Russian Federation-Russia on the basis of a treaty on the mutual delegation of powers and jurisdictions'. Tatarstan's constitution reaffirmed the non-ethnic basis of the Republic's statehood. Article 4 identified both Tatar and Russian as the official languages of the Republic; and Article 19 provided for republican citizenship, adding that citizens of Tatarstan could also acquire citizenship of the Russian Federation.²⁴

Apart from adopting its own post-Soviet constitution, Tatarstan also distanced itself from Moscow by establishing its own direct foreign relations. Although Tatarstan's international contacts with Lithuania, Hungary, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Ukraine were strictly economic relations, involving the sale of Tatarstan's oil in return for hard currency, Tatarstan's relations with the Crimean Republic in Ukraine went beyond the limits of economic cooperation. This economic agreement with Crimea, apart from its clauses on the sale of Tatarstan's oil and different kinds of industrial products to Crimea, enabled Tatarstan to assist the Crimean Tatars in their cultural development.²⁵

The Russian Constitution and the Road to the Power-Sharing Treaty

From Moscow's point of view, Tatarstan's increasing assertiveness stemmed from the discord between President El'tsin and the Russian Parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies. To resolve this deadlock, El'tsin went to referendum on his policies on 25 April 1993. This referendum was not valid in Tatarstan since only 21.7 percent of the eligible voters turned out. According to the results of the referendum, El'tsin won majority support on all four questions: 58.7 percent indicated that they supported the President; 53.0 percent backed his social-economic policies; 49.5 percent voted for pre-term elections for the President, and 67.2 percent voted for pre-term elections for parliament

²⁴ 'Konstitutsiia Respubliki Tatarstana', *Sovetskaia Tatariia*, 12 December, 1992, pp.1-16.

²⁵ *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 2 March 1993.

(See Table A3.6).²⁶ These results gave El'tsin a major political victory against his opponents in the Congress of People's Deputies (CPD) and the regions.

Sensing the growing power of El'tsin, Tatarstan's leadership rushed to sign several intergovernmental agreements with Moscow because the delay in signing these agreements would decrease the negotiating power of Tatarstan when time was on the side of Moscow. Initially, three intergovernmental agreements on higher education; the transportation of oil and petroleum products and environmental protection were signed on 5 June 1993. Two weeks later, Moscow and Tatarstan signed three intergovernmental agreements on property, customs duties and defence industries on 22 June 1993. The first agreement reaffirmed the division of assets in Tatarstan into federal, republican and joint property. The second agreement confirmed that Tatarstan would apply the federal system of tariffs and duties. The third agreement established the joint control of Tatarstan's military-industrial complex between Moscow and the Republic.²⁷

During the July 1993 constitutional conference of the Russian Federation, which was attended by Tatarstan as well as Russia's other republics, the Tatarstan delegation wanted first to insert an article on special federal relations into the constitution, and then to negotiate the scope of bilateral relations. Moscow, however, wanted Tatarstan to join the federation first, and then to negotiate a treaty on the nature of federal relations.²⁸ When Moscow reacted to the Tatar position negatively, the Tatar delegation walked out of the constitutional conference. The delegates of other republics, however, continued their participation. In this way, El'tsin succeeded in isolating Tatarstan from other ethnic republics, which were Tatarstan's 'allies' against Moscow.²⁹ The Constitutional Conference ended with the endorsement of a new federal constitution by the 'yes' votes of 433 delegates against 62 'no' votes. However, it was noteworthy that only 8 of the 21 ethnic republics voted for the draft.

The final draft of the 1993 Russian Constitution had the potential of undermining the core principles of Shaimiev's politics of nationalism, since it gave priority to individual

²⁶ *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 19 May 1993.

²⁷ *Belaia kniga Tatarstana. Put' k suverenitetu 1990-1995 (Sbornik dokumentov)*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1995, pp.65-73.

²⁸ Farid Kh. Mukhametshin, *Respublika Tatarstan: Ot referendum do dogovora*, Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1995, pp.66-71.

rights over collective ethnic rights, and sought to prevent ethnic differences from becoming the foundation of local or central statehood. Moreover, as a significant break with the 1992 Federation Treaty, the 1993 constitution equalised the status of all federal units, and made them subject to the laws and decisions of federal authorities (article 5).

In terms of the division of powers between Moscow and the Republics, the final draft of the Constitution centralised most of the powers of the federal government at the expense of the privileges of republics. Moscow had jurisdiction over the continental shelf (article 67), rights of indigenous minorities (article 69), protection of human rights, establishment of citizenship, federal state institutions, the legal basis of a single market (articles 71, 75), the federal budget, the energy system, foreign policy, international relations, defence and security, border controls, and the organisation of the court system (article 71). Republics were given the right to have a constitution, while other subjects were allowed to have only charters (*ustav* -article 66). The subjects of the federation might have their own state institutions, but article 77.2 viewed federal executive bodies as a single system of authority. Moreover, it authorised the President to suspend the acts of the federal units if they contradicted the constitutional principles.³⁰

This final draft of the Russian Constitution did not please the Shaimiev leadership, since it neither recognised the republics as 'sovereign states' nor recognised their special status. Shaimiev argued that 'the new constitution would turn Russian into a unitary state 'dressed up' like a federation'.³¹ Shaimiev argued that

Today I believe that the constitution is more decoratively federal than real. If you carefully study it and start to live under it, it appears more like the constitution of a unitary state. I believe that if this constitution is not peacefully changed, it will always be internally strained.... if we are going to create a federation under conditions of a civilized society, we have to do it from the bottom up. We stuck by this position and proposed a treaty for mutual delegation of powers.³²

²⁹ Rafael S. Khakimov, 'Na konferentsii po konstitutsii', *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 24 June 1993.

³⁰ *Konstitutsiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, Moscow: Iuridicheskaiia literatura, 1993, pp.56-57.

³¹ *Segondia*, 9 December 1993.

³² Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'Conflict Prevention and Management: The Significance of Tatarstan's Experience', in *Preventing Deadly Conflicts: Strategies and Institutions*, eds. Gail W. Lapidus and Svetlana Tsalik, New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1998, p.73.

Nevertheless, El'tsin still needed to get the draft of the constitution, which granted more powers to the presidency than to the parliament, approved by the Russian parliament. Being aware of the uncompromising position of the Russian parliament, El'tsin sought to solve this constitutional deadlock unilaterally to his own advantage by dissolving the Parliament through his decree (no.1400) 'On Gradual Constitutional Reform in the Russian Federation' on 21 September 1993. However, El'tsin became able to defeat his opponents in the Russian parliament, who refused to comply with his decree, only by ordering the Russian army to storm the Supreme Soviet on 4 October 1993. During this conflict, Shaimiev was careful not to take sides.

On 12 December 1993, Russia's electorate was asked to vote for the new draft constitution, the Federation Council and the State Duma for its 225 single mandate seats and the 225 places from party lists.³³ Reflecting their disapproval, Tatarstan's leadership minimised the turnouts for the referendum on Russian constitution and parliamentary elections in December 1993 to demonstrate that the popular support for Tatarstan's government was higher than the support for Moscow. In fact, the Russian constitutional referendum was declared invalid in Tatarstan, because the turnout was 13.9 percent.³⁴ There were 71.9 percent 'yes' and 24.1 percent 'no' votes (See Table A3.7). Moreover, Tatar ethnic nationalists actively worked against the participation of people in Tatarstan in the 1993 elections, since, according to their propaganda, the high turnout could deny the sovereignty of Tatarstan. Only the Russian parties in Tatarstan (*Soglasie, Ravnopravie i zakonnost'* and Russia's Choice) had their candidates in the elections. In Naberezhno-Chelninskii electoral district, however, elections for the State Duma could not proceed because three candidates could not be found to run. In four districts where elections were held, the validation threshold of 25 percent was not reached (See Table A3.9). As a result, Tatarstan did not send a single representative to Russia's new legislature.³⁵

³³ Richard Sakwa, 'The Russian Elections of December 1993', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.47, no.2, 1995, pp.197-198.

³⁴ The 1993 constitution received support from only nine of the twenty-one republics. Seven republics (Adygeia, Bashkortostan, Chuvashia, Dagestan, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Mordovia, and Tyva) rejected the constitution in the referendum on 12 December 1993. Chechnia did not participate at all.

³⁵ *Respublika Tatarstan* 14 December 1993.

At the federal level, however, the referendum on Russian constitution and parliamentary elections proceeded as Moscow planned. The majority of the voters (58.4 percent) endorsed the introduction of the Constitution. The turnout at the federal level was at 54.32 percent, just above the 50 percent threshold.³⁶ To defend the validity of the referendum in republics, including Tatarstan, where the turnout was below the 50 percent threshold (13.9 percent), Deputy Premier Sergei Shakhrai argued that

[t]he constitution has been approved by citizens, not by the component units. As citizens have approved the constitution, it is now in force in all component parts of the Russian Federation.³⁷

Just like the Russian constitutional referendum, the 1993 Russian parliamentary elections at the federal level constituted a setback to the centrifugal forces, which were dominant mainly in ethnic republics, including Tatarstan. After the elections, El'tsin's opponents lost their power in the parliament. According to the results of these elections based on party lists, two of the pro-systemic parties with no major systemic quarrels with El'tsin, Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (22.92 percent) and Russia's Choice (15.51 percent), fared better than the main anti-systemic party, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, which received just 12.40 percent of the votes (See Table A3.8).³⁸

The contradictory results of the 1993 Russian constitutional referendum and parliamentary elections at the Tatarstan and federal levels convinced both Moscow and Tatarstan about the value of a power-sharing treaty. Especially Shaimiev was worried that the increasingly nationalistic climate of Russian politics would jeopardise the entire prospect for a power-sharing treaty. Therefore, he found it necessary to make concessions to Moscow. In fact, the Tatar ethnic nationalist movement had already lost its popularity, and Tatarstan's economy was in a deep crisis. The lack of a strong nationalist movement and vibrant economy weakened Tatarstan's position vis-à-vis Moscow and forced its leaders to sign a less desirable power-sharing treaty. Tatarstan's leadership used the rise of Vladimir Zhirinovskii's ultra-nationalist party LDPR in the aftermath of the 1993

³⁶ Wendy Slater, 'Russia's Plebiscite on a New Constitution', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol.3, no.3, 21 January 1994, pp.1-7.

³⁷ *Rossia*, 19 January 1994.

³⁸ The electoral turnout for the December 1993 elections and the referendum was very low so they were invalidated. Pauline J. Luong, 'Tatarstan: Elite Bargaining and Ethnic Separatism', in *Growing Pains: Russian Democracy and the Election of 1993*, eds. Timothy J. Colton and Jerry F. Hough, Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1998, p.648.

elections as an excuse for such a settlement. They were able to pose as the saviour of the Tatar nation from the adverse effects of possible adventures of Russian and Tatar extremist ethnic nationalists.

Taking this adverse climate into account, Shaimiev ensured the signing of the Treaty, when he let Vasilii Likhachev, ethnic Russian Vice-President of Tatarstan, revise the original draft through moderating Tatarstan's demands. As Valerii Tishkov, who was a member of the Russian negotiating team, pointed out that even the personal benefit expectation of the ethnic Russians in the Tatarstan delegation played a crucial role in the signing of the power-sharing treaty between Moscow and Kazan. Tishkov noted that

Vasilii Likhachev, for example, asked me in private to approach Gennadi Burbulis and inquire about an opportunity for him to get a Russian ambassadorial post in 'one of the European countries'.³⁹

Consequently, the increasing powers of the ethnic Russians in the Tatarstan delegation led to the exclusion of Rafael Khakimov, Shaimiev's moderate nationalist advisor, Indus Tagirov, the chairperson of WCT and Fandas Safiullin, a nationalist leader from VTOTs, from the Tatar negotiation team. This gave a face-saving formula to these negotiators, since the final version of the treaty differed from Tatarstan's original draft, designed by them.⁴⁰ In this way, all of the remaining obstacles were removed from the road to the signing of the Power-Sharing Treaty between Moscow and Kazan.

The 1994 Russian-Tatar Power-Sharing Treaty

The Russian-Tatar Power-Sharing Treaty 'On the Delimitation of Jurisdictional Authority and the Mutual Delegation of Powers between the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan' was signed by El'tsin and Shaimiev as Presidents, and by Chernomyrdin and Sabirov as Prime Ministers of the Russian

³⁹ Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict*, p.45. Likhachev became the Deputy Head of the Council of the Federation in 1997, and later Ambassador to the European Union in 1998. See Chapter Two.

⁴⁰ Indus R. Tagirov, *Beisezlek baskychlary*, Kazan: Tatar Kitap Neshriaty, 1994, pp.150-158.

Federation and Tatarstan on 15 February 1994 (the full text of the treaty is available in Appendix 1.2.).⁴¹ The preamble of the Treaty defined Tatarstan as

a state that is united with the Russian Federation according to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan and the Treaty on the Delimitation of Jurisdictional Authority and the Mutual Delegation of Powers between the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan, and participates in international and foreign economic relations.⁴²

Tatarstan's 'state powers' are delineated in Article 2. Apart from Tatarstan's right to have its own Constitution and Legislation, Tatarstan was responsible for (1) the protection of human rights; (2) the republican budget and taxes; (3) jurisprudence; (4) the legal regulation of the administration, family, housing, environmental protection and the use of natural resources; (5) granting amnesty to individuals convicted by Tatarstan's courts; (6) property relations except for units of federal property in Tatarstan. (7) the state system of Tatarstan; (8) the republican citizenship; (9) alternative civil service in Tatarstan for citizens having the right to substitute their military service; (10) relations with the other subjects of the Russian Federation; (11) international affairs; (12) National Bank (13) foreign economic activity; (14) the questions of conversion for Tatarstan's enterprises; (15) the state awards of Tatarstan. It should be mentioned here that as compared to the Draft Treaty presented to Moscow, the number of areas in which Tatarstan has the right to legislate is reduced from 18 to 4 (family, residential, environmental, and administrative law) in the Treaty.⁴³

Moscow's powers were delineated in Article 4. Accordingly, Moscow became responsible for (1) the adoption of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws as well as their implementation on the territory of the Russian Federation; (2) the protection of human rights; (3) the formation of federal bodies of state authority; (4) the federal state property; (5) the federal development programmes; (6) the establishment of the legal basis for a common market and federal economic agencies, including federal

⁴¹ 'Dogovor Rossiiskoi Federatsii i Respubliki Tatarstan o razgranichenii predmetov vedeniia i vzaimnom delegirovanii polnomochii mezhdru organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Rossiiskoi Federatsii i organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Respubliki Tatarstana', in *Belaia kniga Tatarstana. Put' k suverenitetu 1990-1995 (Sbornik dokumentov)*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1995, pp.86-92.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.86.

banks; (7) the federal fiscal system; (8) the federal energy, transport and communication systems; (9) foreign policy and international relations of the Russian Federation and questions of war and peace; (10) foreign economic relations of the Russian Federation; (11) defence and security; (12) the defence of federal state borders; (13) the judicial system; (14) federal law of conflicts; (15) the meteorological service and the system of standards; (16) federal state awards; (17) federal state service.

In addition to their exclusive powers, both parties acquired 23 items that are the subject of joint jurisdiction. According to Article 3, these joint powers include (1) the protection of human rights; (2) the protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity; (3) the mobilization of the national economy and military equipment in Tatarstan as well as the conversion of defence industry; (4) the questions of citizenship; (5) international and foreign economic relations; (6) pricing policy; (7) funds for regional development; (8) monetary policy; (9) property relations; (10) the questions of meteorology and calendar system; (11) the consequences of disasters; (12) common energy, transport and communications systems; (13) duty-free regime for the transportation of vehicles, cargoes and products; (14) environmental protection; (15) the social policy; (16) the issues of social security; (17) personnel for justice and police enforcement agencies; (18) litigation questions; (19) police enforcement agencies; (20) organising the state bodies and local self-government; (21) administrative, labour, family, housing, land, and environment legislation; (22) the common use of natural resources; and (23) other matters established by mutual agreement.

In order to clarify the specific issues of joint jurisdictions, Moscow and Tatarstan concluded intergovernmental agreements on foreign economic ties; banking, credit, and monetary policy; budgetary relations; and crime prevention on 15 February 1994. Another intergovernmental agreement was signed on military affairs on 5 March 1994. These agreements have a term of five years, and with the exception of the budgetary agreement, they are all automatically renewed. The Agreement on Budgetary Relations, which needs to be renewed annually, requires Tatarstan to send payments to the federal

⁴³ Hafeez Malik, 'Tatarstan's Treaty with Russia: Autonomy or Independence', *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, no.1, 1994, pp.14-17.

budget for the implementation of powers delegated to Moscow and for the fulfilment of joint programmes.⁴⁴

The Treaty did not delineate the powers of Moscow and Tatarstan clearly. Instead, it created many ambiguities. According to the Treaty, Tatarstan was supposed to be governed by three legal documents: the Treaty of 15 February 1994 and the conflicting constitutions of the Russian Federation and Tatarstan.⁴⁵ The Russian constitution asserts that it is binding throughout the territory of the Federation, and that federal laws have priority unless they violate the federal constitution. However, these clauses contradicted Articles 59 and 61 of the Constitution of Tatarstan, which described Tatarstan as a 'sovereign state' and declared the supremacy of Tatarstan's laws over those of the Russian Federation. The Treaty, on the other hand, left the questions of what sovereignty Tatarstan had and how it could be exercised unclear.⁴⁶ The treaty also created loopholes for Moscow's unilateral actions concerning the issues that fall within the joint competence of both Tatarstan and Moscow, such as the staffing of judiciary and police forces (Article 2.17). This contradicts with Articles 143, 153 and 156 of Tatarstan's constitution that provide for the establishment of an autonomous judiciary and police to be elected, either directly or indirectly by republican or local legislatures.

The most important confusion was on the nature of Tatarstan's relations with Moscow. While Tatarstan's constitution asserts that Tatarstan is a subject of international law and 'associated with' Russia on the basis of a treaty, the Treaty uses the term 'united with' and the Russian constitution describes Tatarstan as 'part of' the federation and identifies it as one of Russia's 21 republics. Tatarstan's claim to the associate state status, which is stated in the republican constitution, implied a confederal approach to Tatarstan's relations with the Russian Federation. Tatarstan's leadership could still insist that Tatarstan has an associate state status even after the signing of the Power-Sharing Treaty, since *ob"edinenie* is a Russian word meaning both association and unification. Moreover, there was no possibility of using *assotsiatsiia* (association), which is a foreign word, in the text of the Treaty. In fact, the signing of the treaty implied a formal equality

⁴⁴ *Belaia kniga Tatarstana. Put' k suverenitetu 1990-1995 (Sbornik dokumentov)*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1995, pp.57-85.

⁴⁵ Boris L. Zheleznov, *Pravovoi status Respubliki Tatarstan*, Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1996, p.205.

between the Russian Federation and Tatarstan. Accordingly, Tatarstan considers the Russian constitution binding on its territory only to the extent that it regulates the Russian State in using the specific powers assigned to it by the treaty.⁴⁷

The problem with these ambiguities comes from the fact that the lack of stable mechanisms of conflict resolution could lead to serious legal deadlocks. In fact, the Russian Constitution authorised only the Federal Constitutional Court and the Court of Arbitration for resolving conflicts concerning the implementation of the Treaty. However, these federal courts are likely to be biased against Tatarstan. Therefore, to resolve such legal conflicts, the Treaty created a commission where federal and Tatar authorities have equal representation. This commission was also to be responsible for harmonising the legislation of Tatarstan and the Russian Federation. In practice, however, disagreements between Moscow and Tatarstan have been resolved mainly through informal personal contacts between El'tsin and Shaimiev.

Reactions to the Treaty

Although the Treaty was well received by the politicians loyal to El'tsin and Shaimiev, their Russian and Tatar nationalist oppositions criticised it severely. The El'tsin leadership saw the Treaty with Tatarstan as an example in arriving at agreements with other republics, such as Kabardino-Balkaria, Bashkortostan and Chechnia. El'tsin himself appreciated the Treaty as a lasting formula that effectively eliminated the threats to the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. For example, in his annual message to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on 16 February 1995 (the full text of El'tsin's message is available in Appendix 2.1.), El'tsin stated that,

The first steps toward the formation of true federalism, in particular the transfer of powers from the centre to the regions, were perceived by many as a sign of the state's weakness, an encroachment on its sovereignty, and even a threat to its territorial integrity...With very rare exceptions, the question of any territories' seceding from Russia did not arise. We had sufficient statesmanlike wisdom and responsibility for this. Treaties between the Russian

⁴⁶ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Suverenitet v sisteme federalizma', *Nauchnyi Tatarstan*, no.1, 1996, pp.53-54.

⁴⁷ Elizabeth Teague, 'Russia and Tatarstan Sign Power-Sharing Treaty', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol.3, no 14, 8 April 1994, p.26.

Federation organs of state power and the organs of power of Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Kabardino-Balkaria made it possible to raise the level of mutual understanding with those components of the Federation and to stabilise the political situation there.⁴⁸

Echoing El'tsin's position, Sergei Shakhrai, Deputy Prime Minister, who had participated in the last round of negotiations of the Treaty, hailed the Treaty as the sole constitutional way of removing contradictions between the federal constitution and the republican constitution.⁴⁹ However, Gennadii Ziuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) said that 'The Treaty with Tatarstan is unacceptable, since the Treaty means a creation of a confederation'.⁵⁰ To Ziuganov, the mere fact of El'tsin negotiating with a member of the federation amounted to the loosening of Moscow's control.

Just like El'tsin, Shaimiev considered the impact of the treaty on the internal situation in Tatarstan highly favourably.

The treaty put everything in its proper place. Let us recall. The nationalist parties advocated the full independence of Tatarstan and secession from Russia. There were stormy rallies - extremists even burst into parliament. They pushed things to absurd lengths - banning mixed marriages. On the other hand, the 'federalists' were opposed to sovereignty - let Tatarstan remain as it was, an autonomy without rights. I always said that both approaches were unacceptable to us. I have always been a centrist, because I am convinced that only a centrist can unite people in such a situation.⁵¹

Shaimiev's pragmatic assessments could be considered realistic. In fact, a radical policy towards Moscow was not in the best interests of the Tatars, since this would destroy the interethnic peace in Tatarstan, whose economy is dependent on the Russian economy. In addition, the Treaty was a blow to the Russian ultra-nationalists, who advocate transforming Russia into a unitary state. The fact that both parties have clearly recognised two constitutions gave Shaimiev a manoeuvring room for legally asking that certain articles of the Russian Constitution should conform to Tatarstan's Constitution. In fact,

⁴⁸ *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 17 February 1995.

⁴⁹ Sergei M. Shakhrai, 'Tatarstan i Rossiia: Iazyk druzhby perevoda ne trebuet', *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 17 February 1994.

⁵⁰ *Kommersant' Daily*, 17 February 1994.

⁵¹ Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'U nas miagkoe vkhozhdenie v rynok', *Trud*, 26 April 1995.

the outcomes of debates over these legal contradictions will determine the degree of autonomy that Tatarstan has come to possess.⁵²

The pragmatic position of Shaimiev was also echoed by his advisors. Shaimiev's advisor on nationalities question and the Chairperson of the World Congress of Tatars, Indus Tagirov, warned the Tatar ethnic nationalists about the dangers of pressing for an outright independence. He stated that;

In certain circles there is an opinion that it is very simple to solve the question of the independence of Tatarstan. They believe that for this it is enough just to 'form an army', 'become a member of the United Nations', 'open embassies in foreign countries' and 'print money'. Who on earth does not know this? Who does not wish it? The problem is how to achieve this. And if someone naively believes that all this is simple and easy, that person is deeply mistaken. This matter requires high professionalism and the presence of special conditions that are lacking today and will be lacking tomorrow. One would always remember this, since every mistake may spell a tragedy for our nation and not for it alone.⁵³

A criticism of the Treaty among Tatarstan's leadership, albeit in a moderate form, came from Shaimiev's Chief Advisor, Rafael Khakimov, who had participated in the negotiations with Moscow. This was not very surprising since Khakimov made this unusual public criticism of Shaimiev's policies when Shaimiev started to cool his relations with Khakimov in the aftermath of the signing of the Treaty. Khakimov asserted that a better treaty could have been signed if Shaimiev had stuck to the objective of sovereignty. Moreover, Khakimov reiterated his well-known stereotypes about post-Soviet Russia's imperial mentality. He claimed that the Treaty was signed due to Tatarstan's 'fear of social and economic problems, fear of chauvinism appearing in Russia and political instability prevailing in that country'.⁵⁴ In addition to these criticisms, Khakimov also claimed that it would be better if the treaty was ratified by the parliaments of the Russian Federation and Tatarstan. However, Sergei Shakhrai had already argued that '[t]his treaty does not require ratification, so as not to give the illusion of its being an international legal document'.⁵⁵ During my interview with Rafik Abdurakhmanov, Chairperson of the Volga-Ural Centre for Conflict Regulation, he

⁵² Oktay F. Tanrisever, 'The Impact of the 1994 Tatar-Russian Power Sharing Treaty on the Formation of Post-Soviet Tatar National Identity', *Slovo*, vol.13, no.1, 2001, p.54.

⁵³ Indus R. Tagirov, 'Natsional'noe dvizhenie: Ego proshloe, nastoiashchee i budushchee', *Tatarstan*, nos.3-4, 1995, p.8.

⁵⁴ *Vatanim Tatarstan*, 30 March 1994.

argued that the lack of ratification of the Treaty made '[t]he Treaty a gentlemen's rather than a judicial agreement. Therefore, it was not ratified by the respective parliaments'.⁵⁶

Unlike the Republican leadership, many Tatar ethnic nationalists viewed the Treaty as a betrayal of Tatar interests by the President of Tatarstan.⁵⁷ Tatar nationalists from radical Tatar ethnic nationalist party, *Ittifak*, calling for outright independence of Tatarstan, to the moderate Tatar ethnic nationalist organisation, VTOTs, which calls for the highest possible autonomy for Tatarstan in the Russian Federation, branded Shaimiev as a traitor (The formation of these Tatar nationalist organisations was discussed in Chapter One. Their development and post-Soviet weaknesses will be discussed in Chapter Four). They nicknamed Shaimiev as Shah Gali, the Kazan Khan who surrendered Kazan to the Russians in the sixteenth century. This Tatar nationalist position was evident in a letter by Zulfat Hakim, a Tatar writer, to Shaimiev:

President,

This treaty... will bring no blessings to the people of Tatarstan. On the contrary, tragically, it has confirmed the subjugation of Kazan to Moscow.

It is the first time in our history that a document, legalizing the rule of Russia over Tatarstan, has been signed. It is a crime against our ancestors, a crime against the nation. To accept this yoke is a betrayal of our forefathers who fought to defend Kazan in 1552...

President, if you do not have the strength to fight, if you are too old for the struggle, you must go.⁵⁸

The ethnic Russian politicians in Tatarstan, such as Ivan Grachev, hailed the Treaty as a victory. Grachev stated that the Treaty normalised the political situation in the Republic.⁵⁹ In fact, the Tatar or Russian ethnic nationalist positions were not popular among the majority of the Tatars and the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan. Leokadia Drobizheva, in her survey of the attitudes of ordinary people towards the Treaty found that almost 60 percent of Tatars and nearly 70 percent of Russians approved of the Treaty in 1996. About 30 percent of Russians and slightly over 30 percent of Tatars could not

⁵⁵ *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 18 February 1994.

⁵⁶ My interview with Rafik M. Abdurakhmanov, Chairperson of the Volga-Ural Centre for Conflict Regulation, Kazan, 1 June 1998.

⁵⁷ Kasym Fasakhov, 'Kem faidasyna? Shartname Rossiia - Tatarstan', *Shehri Kazan*, 5 April 1994.

⁵⁸ Quoted in Marie Bennigsen-Broxup, 'Tatarstan and the Tatars', in *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States*, ed. Graham Smith, New York: Longman, 2nd ed., 1996, p.87.

⁵⁹ Ivan D. Grachev, 'Politicheskaiia situatsiia v Respubliki Tatarstan razvivaetsiia normal'no', *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 23 April 1994.

answer, and only 10 percent of Tatars and 2 percent of Russians disapproved.⁶⁰ The weakness of ethnic nationalist movements in Tatarstan will be discussed in Chapter four.

Comparisons with Bashkortostan, Sakha and Sverdlovsk

The main difficulty in identifying the originality of Tatarstan's Treaty with Moscow stems from the tendency that scholars, such as Kathleen M. Dowley, have focused mainly on the similarities in regional government strategies of striking the federal bargain in Russia.⁶¹ According to Daniel S. Treisman, just like Tatarstan's leaders, local leaders of other regions used the demands for greater autonomy as a smokescreen to maintain power or increase revenues.⁶² Criticising the position of Treisman, Dmitry Gorenburg argues that ethnic leaders secretly pressed for ethnic revival programmes while openly stressing the economic dimension of their policies.⁶³ Yet, both scholars have not explored the differences in the politics of nationalism in Russia's regions. In fact, Moscow's treaties with various non-Russian and Russian regions have different motivations and nuances. These differences could be shown by comparing Tatarstan's position to the economically resource-rich non-Russian republics of Bashkortostan and Sakha as well as Sverdlovsk, which is an ethnically Russian region.

Bashkortostan's rich natural resources and a strong industrial base permitted a high degree of economic self-sufficiency that could be used to press for sovereignty. However, as discussed in Chapter Two, ethnic Bashkirs were in too weak a position to publicly press claims for self-determination because of their demographic status as only the third largest ethnic group in the Republic. Therefore, Bashkortostan's Murtaza Rakhimov has not challenged Moscow as strongly as Shaimiev. Instead of relying on political demands, such as the realisation of an associated state status for Bashkortostan, as was the case

⁶⁰ Leokadia M. Drobizheva, *et. al.*, *Demokratizatsiia i obrazy natsionalizma v Rossiiskoi Federatsii 90-kh godov*, Moscow: Mysl', 1996, p.78.

⁶¹ Kathleen M. Dowley, 'Striking the Federal Bargain in Russia: Comparative Regional Government Strategies', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol.31, no.4, 1998, pp.364-366.

⁶² Daniel S. Treisman, 'Russia's "Ethnic Revival": The Separatist Activism of Regional Leaders in a Postcommunist Order', *World Politics*, vol.41, no.1, 1997, p.249.

⁶³ Dmitry Gorenburg, 'Regional Separatism in Russia: Ethnic Mobilisation or Power Grab?', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.51, no.2, 1999, p.269.

with Tatarstan's leadership, focused on increasing oil export quotas and hard currency revenues, and establishing a one-channel budget system.⁶⁴

Bashkortostan signed its bilateral treaty with Moscow six months after Tatarstan on 3 August 1994. The Treaty recognises Bashkortostan as a 'sovereign state' inside the Russian Federation, with the right to conclude international agreements. Bashkortostan also secured several privileges in the collection of taxes, the exploitation of the Republican natural resources and the control of the oil industry. In exchange for being offered certain tax benefits in this Treaty, just like Tatarstan, Bashkortostan has abandoned its single-channel tax system (by which Bashkortostan could unilaterally halt the flow of taxes collected on their territory to the federal budget) in favour of a multi-channel system of taxation.⁶⁵

As in Tatarstan, the Republican leadership depicted the bilateral treaty as its main achievement, which enabled Bashkortostan to develop its relations with foreign states and to preserve inter-ethnic peace in the republic.⁶⁶ After the signing of the Treaty, Bashkortostan's President Murtaza Rakhimov said that '[I]n the end, we got even more power away from Moscow than Tatarstan did'.⁶⁷ Ironically, the greater sovereignty of Bashkortostan served the interests of both Bashkortostan's former communist *nomenklatura* leadership and Moscow, which acted rationally by dividing its potential opponents (Tatarstan and Bashkortostan) by rewarding both sides in a way that they could counterbalance each other. Given the weakness of anti-Moscow nationalist movement among the Bashkirs and the Bashkir tendency to see Moscow as their tactical ally vis-à-vis Tatarstan (This position could be seen in the Bashkir support for and the Tatar criticism of the Soviet decision to create the Tatar ASSR and the Bashkir ASSR instead of a Tatar-Bashkir Confederation where the Tatars were in majority in 1920), it becomes clear why Moscow treated Bashkortostan more positively than Tatarstan.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ 'Dogovor Rossiiskoi Federatsii i Respubliki Bashkortostan o razgranichenii predmetov vedeniia i vzaimnom delegirovanii polnomochii mezhdru organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Rossiiskoi Federatsii i organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Respubliki Bashkortostan', in *Federalizm vlasti i vlast' federalizma*, eds. Aleksandr N. Arinin and Mikhail N. Guboglo, Moscow: Inteltek, 1997, pp.259-264.

⁶⁶ Ildus G. Ilishev, 'Russian Federalism: Political, Legal and Ethnolinguistic Aspects - A View from the Republic of Bashkortostan', *Nationalities Papers*, vol.26, no.4, 1998, pp.723-759.

⁶⁷ *Segodnia*, 4 August 1994.

Although Sakha (Iakutiia) is Russia's largest federal component in terms of its area, it has not been as effective as Tatarstan and Bashkortostan in using nationalism to gain more concessions from Moscow. Sakha's two main nationalist groups, the moderate umbrella group *Sakha Omuk* (The Sakha People) and the more radical *Sakha Keskile* (Sakha Perspective), gave full support to Mikhail Nikolaev as the republic's first President. They backed Nikolaev as a co-ethnic (although his mother was Russian, Nikolaev considered himself a Sakha) who fulfilled the requirement that the President be able to speak Sakha.⁶⁸ The federal and Sakha leaders seek to gain the control of Sakha's diamond industry, which produces 98 percent of Russia's diamonds. Sakha gained concessions from Moscow when El'tsin designated the Sakha government as the owner of the diamond mines in the republic. Additionally, in a treaty with Moscow, which was signed on 31 March 1992, Sakha won the right to export 20 percent of its diamond production. This money went into a special fund personally controlled by Nikolaev. Similar to the Tatarstan case, the essence of Sakha strategy has been to barter political support for El'tsin for increased autonomy and sovereignty. To this purpose, Nikolaev developed a strong relationship with El'tsin. Meanwhile, Nikolaev also played El'tsin off against the Russian parliament, thereby using the struggle in Moscow to maximise Sakha's role within the diamond industry.⁶⁹

Just like Shaimiev, Nikolaev has used the Sakha ethnic nationalist movement to gain concessions from Moscow. In order to strengthen his position during Sakha's negotiations with El'tsin over the republic's status in the federation structure, Nikolaev stated that 'he acted under heavy pressure from *Sakha Omuk*, and that some decisions of Sakha's parliament were made against his will.'⁷⁰ Sakha signed a power-sharing treaty and 15 separate agreements with Moscow on 29 June 1995. The Treaty treated Sakha relatively better than most other republics through special bilateral concessions. The Treaty granted Sakha the right to establish its own taxes and duties, and to create and use a fund for precious metals and stones (Article 1.1). Like Tatarstan, Sakha has the right to engage in external economic activity. The Sakha treaty is unique in that it establishes

⁶⁸ Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer and Uliana Vinokurova, 'Nationalism, Interethnic Relations and Federalism: The Case of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia)', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.48, no.1, 1996, pp.105-106.

⁶⁹ Daniel R. Kempton, 'The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia): The Evolution of Centre-Periphery Relations in the Russian Federation', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.48, no.4, 1996, pp.592-595.

⁷⁰ Anatoly M. Khazanov, *After the USSR: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995, p.183.

joint federal and republic jurisdiction in developing budgetary federalism, creating special (budget and off-budget) programs and funds (Article 2.2), co-ordinating the creation of federal state reserves, agreeing on export quotas of precious metals and other strategic raw materials, and developing and jointly using the resources of the continental shelf.⁷¹

Sverdlovsk, which is located in the Urals, is an ethnically Russian region. It is one of Russia's most productive regions for the extraction and processing of metals, including iron, steel, aluminium, nickel and copper. The region produces around 5 percent of Russia's total industrial output. The governor of Sverdlovsk region in 1993 was Eduard Rossel, an ethnic German, who sought to use the greater autonomy as a safe haven for the economic and political actions of the local elite. However, when Rossel joined Sverdlovsk's regional parliament in officially proclaiming that the region became the 'Ural Republic' on 27 October 1993, El'tsin not only dissolved this republic but also dismissed Rossel on 9 November 1993. Rossel again became Sverdlovsk's governor by taking over 60 percent of the vote in the second round of Russia's first popular gubernatorial elections in August 1995.⁷²

El'tsin's need for the support of Rossel's 'Transformation of the Urals Movement' in the upcoming Presidential elections in June 1996 played an important role in the signing of the power-sharing treaty between Moscow and Sverdlovsk on 12 January 1996. The treaty established that Moscow and Sverdlovsk would come to an agreement on the amount of revenue collected on the territory to be allocated for federal taxes. As a result, Sverdlovsk was able to reduce its tax burden to the centre from 75 percent to roughly 25 percent. The Sverdlovsk treaty is the first case of Moscow's bilateral treaty with a Russian region seeking to acquire the same rights as the republics enjoy. For the first time, a Russian region was treated as privileged as a non-Russian republic, such as Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. In fact, the Sverdlovsk treaty contains a number of joint competences not listed in the federal constitution, such as the 'regulation of matters related to processing and use of precious metals, gems and their products in

⁷¹ 'Dogovor o razgranichenii predmetov vedeniia i polnomochii mezhdru organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Rossiiskoi Federatsii i organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Respubliki Sakha (Iakutiia)', in *Federalizm vlasti i vlast' federalizma*, eds. Aleksandr N. Arinin and Mikhail N. Guboglo, Moscow: Inteltek, 1997, pp.270-276.

enterprises located in Sverdlovsk oblast', or the article on 'alternative forms of civil service' (as in the treaties with Tatarstan and Bashkortostan).⁷³

This Treaty with Sverdlovsk shows that Moscow started to push for equalising the positions of Russian regions and non-Russian republics in 1996 not by downgrading the status of the republics, which would be very problematic given the weakness of Moscow in the post-Soviet era, but by upgrading the status of Russian regions. A unique provision of this treaty is the requirement that the oblast's laws be brought into conformity with the treaty. While the earlier treaties with republics were compensations for the loyalty of their republican leaders to Moscow, Sverdlovsk's treaty with Moscow actually legitimised benefits received by the signatories, and led to an extra-constitutional change in the status of the Federation subjects.⁷⁴ Although this trend could have moved Russia from being a constitutional federation to a treaty-based federation, Vladimir Putin's federal reforms of 2000, which are discussed in Chapter Five, have reversed these centrifugal trends, and centralised the federation structure.

This comparative analysis shows that Moscow accommodated these republics for different reasons. Tatarstan gained more concessions from Moscow than any of these federal units because of its effective use of economic, political and ethnic factors in its negotiations with Moscow. Moscow granted more concessions to Bashkortostan than Sakha and Sverdlovsk not because of Bashkortostan negotiation skills but because Moscow wanted to establish good relations with this republic in order to counterbalance Tatarstan's influence in the Middle Volga region. Sakha's relations with Moscow seem to be characterised by the politics of diamond industry in Sakha, where Russians play the most important role. Moscow's Treaty with Sverdlovsk aimed to equalise the status of rich Russian regions with that of non-Russian Republics so that Russian regions could counterbalance the autonomy-minded republics, such as Tatarstan. Contrary to this calculation of Moscow, however, greater decentralisation of power from Moscow to

⁷² Anatolii D. Kirillov, B. Kirillov and A. Ryzhkov, *Vybory pervogo gubernatora sverdlovskoi oblasti*, Ekaterinburg: Ural politicheskii, 1995, p.5.

⁷³ 'Dogovor o razgranichenii predmetov vedeniia i polnomochii mezhdu organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Rossiiskoi Federatsii i organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Sverdlovskoi oblasti', in *Federalizm vlasti i vlast' federalizma*, eds. Aleksandr N. Arinin and Mikhail N. Guboglo, Moscow: Inteltek, 1997, pp.313-319.

⁷⁴ Gerald M. Easter, 'Redefining Centre-Regional Relations in the Russian Federation: Sverdlovsk Oblast', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.49, no.4, 1997, pp.628-633.

regions is in the interest of Tatarstan since this could weaken Moscow's capacity to check the behaviour of Tatarstan's leadership.

Tatarstan's Support for El'tsin in Exchange for Greater Autonomy (1994-1996)

After the signing of Tatarstan's Power-Sharing Treaty with Moscow, a new chapter was opened in Tatarstan's relations with Moscow. According to Shaimiev, the signing of the Treaty was not the end of Tatarstan's drive towards greater autonomy for Tatarstan. On the contrary, it was just the beginning of a long process. He stated this point as follows:

You know, when we signed the treaty, it was as if a weight fell from our shoulders. Nevertheless, I said: 'Boris Nikolaevich, Tatarstan will not stop at this'. The president looked at me in surprise: 'But we have just signed a treaty'. I explained: 'If we want Russia to be strong, we must set about decentralising the economy and give more rights to the localities'. The centre even now wants to keep everything in its own hands.⁷⁵

In the post-Treaty period, Tatarstan's strategy in its relations with Moscow was to give political support to El'tsin in return for gaining greater autonomy. In this atmosphere, Shaimiev agreed to sign the El'tsin-sponsored 'Civic Accord' on declaring loyalty to the Russian Constitution in April 1994. Meanwhile, Tatarstan's success in gaining a special status in the federation structure and the total defiance of the federal authority by Chechnia strengthened the hawkish politicians in Moscow. Consequently, Nikolai Egorov, an ethnic Cossack, who supported Moscow's Chechen policy strongly, replaced Sergei Shakhrai, as the Federal Minister of Nationality and Regional Policies on 16 May 1994.⁷⁶

To develop the joint mechanisms for implementing the provisions of the Treaty, El'tsin visited Kazan from 30 May-1 June 1994.⁷⁷ Both Presidents agreed to create a bilateral commission for monitoring the implementation of the Treaty. According to the agreement, Shakhrai would head the Commission for Russia and Vice-President Vasilii

⁷⁵ Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'U nas miagkoe vkhozhdenie v rynek', *Trud*, 26 April 1995, p.3.

⁷⁶ The hawkish minister Egorov was replaced by Viacheslav Mikhailov, who favoured a peaceful settlement to the Chechen war, on 5 July 1995.

⁷⁷ *Moscow Times*, 31 May 1994.

Likhachev would do the same for Tatarstan.⁷⁸ It was also agreed that a 'Supervisory Committee for the Implementation of the Treaty' would be headed by Tatarstan's Prime Minister Sabirov and Russia's First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets. Meanwhile, Nail Aminov, Deputy Chairperson of the Russian Federation State Committee for Nationalities Affairs, became Tatarstan's plenipotentiary representative to the Russian Federation. Tatarstan's Moscow representative office was to employ 18 people; including two deputies, a business manager, and economic and foreign departments.⁷⁹

Tatarstan's leadership took a concrete step in developing its relations with Moscow, when the elections for the federal legislature were held in Tatarstan on 13 March 1994 despite the Tatar nationalist calls for another boycott. The high turnout, which was at 58.5 percent, demonstrated a remarkable endorsement of Tatarstan's leadership when contrasted with the 13.9 percent turnout in the December 1993 constitutional referendum and parliamentary elections. Shaimiev, with 91.2 percent of the valid ballots, and Tatarstan's Supreme Soviet Chairperson, Farid Mukhametshin, with 71.1 percent of the votes, became deputies to the Council of the Federation. The elections to the State Duma were held in all of the five districts. According to the results of the elections, two seats went to the candidates supported by Shaimiev's party *Edinstvo i progress* (Unity and Progress), two to the communists and only one seat went to the pro-Moscow local electoral bloc, Equal Rights and Legality (*Ravnopravie i zakonnost'*). In terms of their ethnic origins, of the five deputies elected to the Duma, three (Valentin Mikhailov, Gennadii Egorov and Oleg Morozov) were ethnic Russian, one was Tatar (Vladimir Altykhov) and one was Jewish (Gabdulvakhid Bagautdinov) (See Table A3.10).⁸⁰

The growth in election turnout in Tatarstan should be underlined since it reflected the hold of Tatarstan's leadership over the electorate in Tatarstan. If we look at the previous elections, a similar pattern could be identified. When Shamiev was elected as Tatarstan's President on 12 June 1991, the turnout was at 63.4 percent, which was clearly higher than the turnout for the 12 June 1991 Russian Presidential elections in Tatarstan, which was at

⁷⁸ Shakhrai was replaced by former First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Potanin in January 1997. Laura Belin, 'Potanin Appointed Head of Russian-Tatar Commission on Power Sharing', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.2, no.4, 29 January 1997.

⁷⁹ *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 28 June 1994, p.6.

36.59 percent (The Russia-wide turnout for the Russian Presidential elections was 74.66 percent). During the referendums on El'tsin's performance on 25 April 1993 and the Russian Constitution on 12 December 1993, the turnouts in Tatarstan were as low as 21.7 and 13.9 percent respectively (The Russia-wide turnouts for these referendums were 64.5 and 54.32 percent respectively). The conscious manipulations of Tatarstan's leadership concerning election turnouts in Tatarstan could be evidenced in Shaimiev's statement on 18 January 1994. According to this statement the repeat elections for the Russian State Duma might take place on 13 March 1994, if prior to that date a power sharing treaty was signed. Having secured the Power-Sharing Treaty on 15 February 1994, the March 1994 and December 1995 elections for the Russian State Duma were held with high turnouts, which rose to 58.5 and 58.7 percent respectively. The turnout levels have even become higher than the federal average gradually since 1996. In June- July 1996 Presidential elections, for example, the turnouts in Tatarstan were at 74 and 77 percent respectively as compared to the federal averages of 69.81 and 68.88 percent. The election turnout was also higher than the federal average of 61.68 percent in the 19 December 1999 State Duma elections, when the turnout in Tatarstan was at 72 percent (See Table A3.1).⁸¹

In the post-Treaty era, Tatarstan's leadership has continued to be able to consolidate its positions both in the Republic and in its relations with Moscow through Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism*. In order to weaken Shaimiev, Moscow sought to undermine his hold over the electorate in Tatarstan by changing the electoral legislation in Tatarstan in accordance with the federal election law. The federal law, which was adopted in December 1994, required that local election observers have the right to demand and polling station commissions are obliged to provide the certified copies of the counting protocols. According to the law, local observers can also accompany mobile ballot boxes. However, local observers are often refused such protocols in Tatarstan on the grounds that this was not specified clearly in the Republican law. Also observers representing candidates are refused to be present during counting by electoral commissions at all levels in Tatarstan. Moreover, observers are not allowed to access to

⁸⁰ Rashid Akhmetov, 'Tatarstan: The Post-Electoral Ethno-Political Situation', in *Bulletin: Network on Ethnological Monitoring and Early Warning of Conflict*, Cambridge, MA: Conflict Management Group, 1995, pp.53-54.

⁸¹ Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.302.

premises where votes are counted and the protocols of lower-level commissions are consolidated. Furthermore, elections without choice are allowed in Tatarstan. Finally, unlike the federal law, Tatarstan's law adopts the Soviet-era negative voting technique of crossing out the names of candidates against whom the voter wishes to vote.⁸²

Relying on his success in electoral engineering mechanisms in Tatarstan, Shaimiev demonstrated that his support is vital to the performance of federal parties and politicians in Tatarstan. For example, in the December 1995 State Duma elections, Shaimiev supported Viktor Chernomyrdin's centrist party, Our Home is Russia (NDR), which received 28.62 percent of the votes in Tatarstan. This was well above the 10.1 percent vote that NDR received across Russia as a whole. In contrast, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) received only 15.42 percent, which was below its overall performance at the federal level (22.3 percent). Finally, Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democratic Party of the Russian Federation (LDPR), which was not favoured by Tatarstan's leadership, scored badly with a mere 4.84 percent, which was less than its 11.1 percent federal average (See Table A3.11).⁸³ According to the election results in the five districts of Tatarstan, however, Shaimiev's influence was not clear. Only two of the five representatives of Tatarstan to the State Duma (Azat Khamaev and Gabdulvakhid Bagautdinov) were close to Shaimiev. The remaining three deputies, however, were very critical of Shaimiev (Oleg Morozov, Vladimir Altykhov, Sergei Shashurin [See Table A3.12]).⁸⁴

Having been re-elected as Tatarstan's President for a second five-year term by getting 97.1 percent of the vote on 24 March 1996 (See Table A3.13), Shaimiev demonstrated the value of his influence over the electorate in Tatarstan during the 1996 Russian Presidential elections by mobilising the Republican support for El'tsin against Gennadii Ziuganov. In the first round, El'tsin got 38.34 percent of the votes in Tatarstan, which was slightly ahead of Ziuganov's performance at 38.10 percent (The Russia-wide votes for El'tsin and Ziuganov in the first round were 35.79 and 32.49 percent respectively. See

⁸² Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Izbratel'noe zakonodatel'stvo i vybory v Tatarstane: Opyt regional'nogo pravovogo separatizma', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, pp.13-14.

⁸³ *Moscow News*, 29 December 1995, p.2.

⁸⁴ *Parlamentskie vybory v Rossii*, Moscow: Moscow Carnegie Centre, 1996, p.55.

Table A3.14). Thanks to the personal support of Shaimiev in the second round, the votes for El'tsin in Tatarstan rose to 61.45 percent while the votes for Ziuganov declined to 32.31 percent (The Russia-wide votes for El'tsin and Ziuganov in the second round were 54.39 and 40.73 percent respectively. See Table A3.15). In response to the falsifications claims of the CPRF, the Russian Supreme Court established on 10 July 1996 that in Tatarstan 'unidentified persons' had fabricated false documents concerning the first round of elections on 16 June 1996.⁸⁵ The Court also identified that in the protocols of five districts in Kazan, not only the numbers of votes for several of the candidates differed, but also there were 'significant differences' between the signatures of election commission members on different copies of the same protocols for one and the same district.⁸⁶

Although El'tsin awarded Shaimiev with the 'Diploma of the Government of the Russian Federation' for his 'services to the Fatherland' in 1997, Tatarstan's leadership expected something more concrete, such as economic dividends, in return for the electoral support for El'tsin in Tatarstan. Shaimiev simply imitated the seven pro-El'tsin businessmen, who were also called 'the oligarchs' or 'the seven bankers' (*semibankirshchina*). These 'oligarchs' supported El'tsin's Presidential election campaign at the federal level in return for shares in the large state-owned monopolies, profitable raw material export licences and some other economic assets. Moreover, Shaimiev sought to cooperate with these oligarchs in establishing commercial relations with the outside world. For example, he asked the President of the Russian Jewish Congress and Head of Most Bank, Vladimir Gusinskii, to attract foreign investment from Israel.⁸⁷ For Razil Valeev, a Deputy in Tatarstan's Parliament and a close associate of Shaimiev, the rise in foreign investment in Tatarstan could promote Tatarstan's autonomy from Moscow. During my interview with Valeev, he stated that:

Our [the Tatars' –OFT] search for sovereignty should focus above all on the economic sovereignty of Tatarstan. It is mainly Tatarstan's economic

⁸⁵ Aleksandr V. Shtanin, 'Pobeda kazalas' neveroiatnoi. Uspekh na vyborakh v usloviakh avtoritarnoi vlasti i fal'sifikatsii rezul'tatov', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.110.

⁸⁶ John Löwenhardt, 'The 1996 Presidential Elections in Tatarstan', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, vol.13, no.1, 1997, pp.132-144.

⁸⁷ Laura Belin, 'Gusinskii in Tatarstan for Synagogue Reopening', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.1, no.17, 18 December 1996.

dependence on Moscow that limits Tatarstan's autonomy. The only way out for us is to co-operate with the outside world and the rich Russian regions in creating a viable economy in Tatarstan that could resist Moscow's pressures.⁸⁸

In fact, Tatarstan's foreign economic relations developed as a result of Tatarstan's cooperative attitude towards Moscow, whose support was vital for getting official guarantees to foreign investors in Tatarstan.⁸⁹ Because of its strong industrial base, stable socio-political environment and liberal legislative base, Tatarstan has been more competitive in attracting foreign capital as compared to other Russian regions.⁹⁰ Tatarstan carries out its foreign relations through the Department for Foreign Affairs and the Commonwealth of Independent States. In addition, Tatarstan established its own representations in the United States, France, Ukraine, Turkey, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. Based on this institutional infrastructure, Tatarstan has developed its relations with the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) notably the Turkic republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. It has also constructed strong relations with Ukraine, Belarus, Tajikistan, and Moldova.⁹¹

Shaimiev has expanded Tatarstan's foreign economic relations through his pragmatic politics of Tatar nationalism, in which the Tatar diaspora plays a significant role. In fact, the presence of the Tatar diaspora both within and outside the Russian Federation has influenced Tatarstan's relations with Moscow significantly. Nearly seven million Tatars live in the Russian Federation and the former republics of the Soviet Union. Smaller Tatar communities are also found in Turkey, Poland, Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, China and the United States (See Table A4.3).⁹² Tatarstan's relations with the Tatar Diaspora are co-ordinated by the World Congress of Tatars (WCT), which has been headed by Indus Tagirov. The WCT's main problem stems from the tension between the Tatar Diaspora outside Russia, who demand Tatarstan's greater autonomy from Moscow, and the Tatars inside Russia (but outside Tatarstan), who ask for a closer collaboration

⁸⁸ My interview with Razil I. Valeev, Deputy of the State Soviet of the Republic of Tatarstan and Chairperson of the National Library of the Republic of Tatarstan, Kazan, 2 June 1998.

⁸⁹ Neil J. Melvin, *Regional Foreign Policies in the Russian Federation*, London: RIIA, 1995, pp.12-15.

⁹⁰ Filzia G. Khamidullin, 'Rynochnye reformy: Pervye itogi i sotsial'nye posledstviia', *Nauchnyi Tatarstan*, vol.3, no.3-4, 1997, pp.52-56.

⁹¹ Gul'nara R. Shaikhutdinova, 'Dogovorno-pravovaia praktika Respubliki Tatarstan na sovremennom etape', *Panorama-Forum*, no.2, 1995, p.20.

between Kazan and Moscow.⁹³ In order to bring the Tatars inside Russia under Tatarstan's influence, Tagirov advanced the idea of cultural autonomy for the Tatars. The cultural autonomy of the Tatars in the Volga region, where 75 percent of Russia's Tatars live, is very important, since the region's rich natural resources and advanced industrial base encourage Tatarstan to consolidate its role in the Republic.⁹⁴ In the case of the Crimean Tatars, Tatarstan signed a bilateral agreement with Ukraine's Republic of Crimea to foster Tatarstan's active cultural links with the Crimean Tatars in July 1994.⁹⁵

In Tatarstan's foreign economic policy, the relations with the United States are of great importance, since, according to Tatarstan's leadership, the United States as a superpower could use Tatarstan as a Trojan horse to weaken the federal centre. In fact, Shaimiev hinted that Tatarstan would become the engine of political decentralisation in Russia, during his keynote address at Harvard University on 6 October 1994 (the full text of Shaimiev's speech is available in Appendix 2.2.):

As you all know, a number of independent states emerged following the disintegration of the USSR. However, though this is not your fault, most of you don't know that there is a Tatarstan, which plays an important role in reforming Russia today. Among the twenty former autonomous republics of the Russian Federation, Tatarstan was destined to lead the movement for reshaping the Russian Federation through both preventing the development of Russia along an imperial line and doing everything possible for benefiting from this historic opportunity to create a democratic Russian Federation.⁹⁶

Alarmed by the Western interest in Tatarstan's role in Russian politics, the former Head of the State Committee for Nationalities Affairs, Valerii Tishkov, criticised Shaimiev's visit to the United States severely.

The turning point in the difficult Russia-Tatarstan dialogue was not the signing of the treaty on the delimitation of power, which was a more or less a symbolic act. No, the decisive point was reached when President Shaimiev had

⁹² Katherine E. Graney, 'The Volga Tatars: Diasporas and the Politics of Federalism', in *Nations Abroad: Diaspora Politics and International Relations in the Former Soviet Union*, eds. Charles King and Neil J. Melvin, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999, p.157.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.170.

⁹⁴ Agdas Kh. Burganov, 'Budushchee tatarskoi diaspori v Rossii', *Panorama-Forum*, no.3, 1995, p.23.

⁹⁵ John W. Slocum, 'A Sovereign State within Russia? The External Relations of the Republic of Tatarstan', *Global Society: Journal of Interdisciplinary International Relations*, vol.13, no.1, 1999, pp.49-76.

⁹⁶ Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'The Future of the Russian Federation: A Look [sic] from Tatarstan', in *Suverennyi Tatarstan*, eds. Farid Kh. Mukhametshin and R. T. Ismailov, Moscow: Insan, 1997, p.57-58.

accumulated enough authority and resources to manage an intercontinental flight in his private plane to deliver a lecture at Harvard University and introduce Tatarstan's businessmen and politicians to useful and enjoyable outside world contacts.⁹⁷

In fact, Tatarstan's relations with the United States yielded very fruitful results. During First Deputy Prime Minister Ravil Muratov's talks with the United States Vice-President Al Gore, the United States side agreed to invest 1.5 billion dollars a year in Tatarstan's agriculture, oil industry and the Elabuga auto plant between 1997 and 1999.⁹⁸

Tatarstan's relations with Turkey, a close ally of the United States, raised also concerns in Moscow that these relations would inflame pan-Turkist tendencies in the Russian Federation. Turkey signed an economic and cultural co-operation agreement with Tatarstan on 28 May 1995.⁹⁹ This agreement paved the way for Tatarstan to open a mission in Ankara and for Turkey to open a consulate-general in Kazan.¹⁰⁰ In reality, Turkey's role in Tatarstan has been exaggerated by Moscow, since Turkey, which has its own deep economic problems, has a very limited economic influence in Tatarstan. For example, although Turkey is the fifth largest foreign investor in Tatarstan, its trade volume was around 5 percent of Tatarstan's overall trade.¹⁰¹

Deterioration of Economic Relations and Shaimiev's Politics of Nationalism (1997-1998)

Moscow became disillusioned with its inability to bring Tatarstan into line with other compliant regions in the aftermath of the signing of the Treaty with Tatarstan, because Tatarstan coped with Moscow's attempts to do so through *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism*. This development was not foreseen by researchers like Sergei Kondrashov who argued that both the federal and Tatarstan authorities share an interest in denying the

⁹⁷ Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict*, p.45

⁹⁸ Natalia Gurushina, 'U.S. to Invest 4.5 Billion Dollars in Tatarstan', *Open Media Research Institute Daily Digest*, 19 September 1996.

⁹⁹ 'Mezhpravitel'svennye soglasheniia Respubliki Tatarstana s Turetskoi Respublikoi', *Panorama-Forum*, vol.4, no.1 1996, pp.152-153.

¹⁰⁰ Turkey opened its general consulate, which is the first foreign diplomatic mission in Tatarstan, on 11 October 1996. *Respublika Tatarstan*, 12 October 1996.

¹⁰¹ Liz Fuller, 'Turkish Government Delegation Visits Kazan', *RFE/RL Newslines*, 5 May 1998.

radical wing of the nationalists a pool of potential supporters.¹⁰² However, as I pointed out in my review of his book,

[t]he Tatar political establishment needs the survival of Tatar ethnic nationalism for the continuity of various privileges granted by Moscow. If Tatar ethnic nationalism was eradicated for good, then Moscow would not need to tolerate Tatarstan's exceptional autonomy in the Russian Federation.¹⁰³

Apart from Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism*, El'tsin's chronic poor health, frequent government reshuffles in Moscow and Russia's post-Soviet economic problems made it also difficult for the Kremlin to define and enforce a coherent policy toward Tatarstan.

Moscow started to toughen its position against Kazan in 1997 since the distrust between Moscow and the Shaimiev leadership increased when Tatarstan concluded an agreement with the secessionist Chechen leadership on 21 May 1997. According to this agreement, Tatarstan promised to offer medical help and educational opportunities for the Chechens in Tatarstan. Moscow's policies were directed at undermining Tatarstan's economic power and independence from Moscow by creating tight checks over foreign aid, financial transactions, licences, quotas and subsidies.¹⁰⁴

Moscow's strategy of undermining Tatarstan's autonomy was based on severing the Republic's foreign economic activities, which rely mainly on the oil, automotive and aviation industries.¹⁰⁵ Of these three, the oil industry constitutes the most important industrial sector. Tatneft is not only the largest oil company in Tatarstan but also Russia's fourth largest oil producer. Since it has been very difficult for Moscow to bring Tatneft under its influence due to the financial strength of the company, Moscow has focused on targeting Tatarstan's automotive industry. Tatarstan's KamAZ Company, which is located in Naberezhnye Chelny, is the largest truck manufacturing plant in the Russian

¹⁰² Sergei Kondrashov, *Nationalism and the Drive for Sovereignty in Tatarstan, 1988-92: Origins and Development*, London: Macmillan, 2000, p.197.

¹⁰³ Oktay F. Tanrisever, Review of Sergei Kondrashov, *Nationalism and the Drive for Sovereignty in Tatarstan, 1988-92: Origins and Development*, *Slavonic and East European Review*, vol.79, no.2, 2001 p.272.

¹⁰⁴ Rashid Akhmetov, 'Moscow Tightens the Screws on Kazan', *Jamestown Foundation Prism*, 7 November 1997.

Federation. In spring 1997, the factory was more than a billion dollars in debt. However, Moscow refused to restructure Tatarstan's debts. Instead, the Russian government replaced the ethnic Tatar General Director of KamAZ, Nikolai Bekh, with an ethnic Russian, Ivan Kostin.¹⁰⁶ The aviation industry is more dependent on Moscow than is Tatarstan's oil and automotive industries. Thus, the federal government effectively manipulated the industry's dependence on Moscow in order to bring Tatarstan's leadership under its own control. To this purpose, Moscow reduced its state purchase orders (*goszakazy*) to buy Tatarstan-made military and civilian aircrafts sharply. These measures were serious blows that worsened the Republican economy.¹⁰⁷

However, Moscow's biggest blow to Tatarstan's economy was Gazprom's sudden cutback in gas supplies to Tatarstan in 1997. Tatarstan's debt to Gazprom, which supplies almost ninety percent of Tatarstan's need for natural gas, was about 4.3 trillion rubles in 1997. This amount was about one-third of Tatarstan's budget. Gazprom initially demanded the shares in profitable enterprises of Tatarstan as a method of clearing off the debt. It was only after Shaimiev made an urgent phone call to Gazprom chairperson Rem Viakhirev that gas supplies were restored. According to their agreement, Tatarstan would pay off 70 percent of its debts to Gazprom on an accelerated schedule.¹⁰⁸ Shaimiev's success in defending some of Tatarstan's local industries from destruction could be explained by the fact that Moscow was worried about the collapse of the federal energy networks and eliciting popular protest in the Republic due to a potential bankruptcy of some local industries.¹⁰⁹

Tatarstan's leadership responded to Moscow's economic pressures through revitalising its *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* in the fields of Tatarstan's citizenship law, the format of the federal passports, the adoption of the Latin alphabet for the Tatar language

¹⁰⁵ For Tatarstan's industrial base, see Marat R. Mustafin and Rashid G. Khuzeev, *Vse o Tatarstane (Ekonomiko-geograficheskii spravochnik)*, Kazan: Tatknizdat, 1994, pp.40-54.

¹⁰⁶ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'A Tale of Two Car Makers in Tatarstan', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.3, no.50, 17 December 1998.

¹⁰⁷ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Is the Federal Government Cracking Down on Tatarstan?' *Russian Regional Report*, vol.2, no.34, 9 October 1997.

¹⁰⁸ Natalia Gurushina, 'Gazprom Clamps Down on Debtors in Tatarstan', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.2, no.9, 6 March 1997.

¹⁰⁹ David Woodruff, 'Barter of the Bankrupt: The Politics of Demonetization in Russia's Federal State', in *Uncertain Transitions: Ethnographies of Change in the Postsocialist World*, eds. Michael Buraway and Katherine Verdery, Oxford: Rowman&Littlefield, 1999, p.111.

and the limitations on the authority of Russia's Supreme Muftiate in Tatarstan. To begin with, the Tatar leadership intensified its efforts to adopt its own citizenship law. Shaimiev reminded Moscow that the Tatarstan constitution and the 1994 power-sharing treaty gave the citizens of Tatarstan a right to hold dual citizenship. The Tatar leadership discussed the introduction of passports of the Republic of Tatarstan as well.¹¹⁰ However, the bill on citizenship introduced to the State Council in February 1998 has met staunch opposition from Russian-speaking parliamentarians, while enjoying the solid support of ethnic Tatars. Its Article 6 states that the loss of Russian citizenship does not imply automatic loss of Tatarstani citizenship. By implication, a person holding Tatarstani citizenship but not Russian citizenship could enjoy all the rights of a citizen within the Republic, but without any of the obligations to the Russian Federation (such as serving in the military).¹¹¹ Although Tatarstan's right to institute its own citizenship is not contrary to the Russian Law on Citizenship, which recognises dual citizenship, Boris Zheleznov argued that '[t]he notion of dual citizenship is correct when we are talking about different states, but not when we are talking about the Federation and its subjects'.¹¹²

Apart from the citizenship law, Tatarstan's State Council passed a decree on 16 October 1997, halting the distribution in Tatarstan of the new Russian passport, which bears the imperial Russian double-headed eagle on its cover, until the parliament makes a final decision. This decision of Tatarstan's parliament led to a pragmatic cooperation between Shaimiev's regime and Tatar ethnic nationalists. For example, to support the position of Tatarstan's parliament, some members of the VTOTs burned a model of the new Russian passport. A Tatar nationalist deputy in the State Council Fandas Safiullin, told the crowd that the introduction of a Russian passport with no entry for 'nationality' meant the beginning of Russian fascism.¹¹³ Moscow's position on the issue of nationality was elaborated by Valerii Tishkov as follows:

¹¹⁰ Liz Fuller, 'Tatarstan Adopts Land Code, Citizenship Law', *RFE/RL Newswire*, 16 April 1998.

¹¹¹ Nail M. Mukhiamov, 'Khronika politicheskogo protsessa (1988-1998)', in *Regiony Rossii: Khronika i rukovoditeli. Tom.7*, ed. Kimitaka Matsuzato, Sapporo, Japan: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, 2000, p.102.

¹¹² Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Debates Rage Over Tatarstani Citizenship', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.3, no.11, 19 March 1998. See also M. K. Malikov, 'Grazhdanstvo Rossiiskoi Federatsii i grazhdanstvo ee sub''ektov', *Gosudarstvo i pravo*, no.8, 1997, pp.21-24.

¹¹³ *Vremia i den'gi*, 18 October 1997. Moscow has agreed with Bashkortostan and Tatarstan on resuming the issuance of passports, with the four-page insert, including republic symbols and information in national languages. Liz Fuller, 'Tatarstan, Bashkortostan Resolve Passport Dispute with Moscow', *RFE/RL Russian Federation Report*, vol.2, no.46, 20 December 2000.

The view of the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology remains that nationality should be kept off the Russian Federation passports. It believes that if the government concedes this, Russia will spend the next 30 or 40 years arguing over state building, with unpredictable consequences.¹¹⁴

This way of justifying the decision to remove the line on nationality in the Russian internal passport naturally rang the alarm bells not only for Tatar ethnic nationalists, but also for Tatarstan's leadership. This explains why these groups opted for a pragmatic co-operation on this issue.

In order to distance the Tatars from Russian culture, the Second World Congress of Tatars (WCT) decided on 30 August 1997 to replace the Cyrillic alphabet by the Latin alphabet for the Tatar language. In his speech to the Congress, Shaimiev criticised the Soviet decision to introduce the Cyrillic alphabet in 1939. Shaimiev recalled how

without any discussion, and without consulting the Tatar intelligentsia, the Tatars were forced to adopt the Cyrillic alphabet which, in large part, does not conform to the rules and spirit of Tatar speech.¹¹⁵

The legitimacy of the decision, which affected the entire Tatar people, was based on the fact that the representatives of Tatar Diaspora were also present at the WCT, where the decision was taken. In order to soften criticisms, it was agreed that the transition would take place gradually in ten years, starting on 1 September 2001.¹¹⁶ This decision was a challenge to Moscow's authority in Tatarstan, since the federal law stipulates that all names and personal details in federal documents must be written only in Cyrillic.

Tatarstan's leadership also sought to distance Tatarstan's Islamic establishment from Moscow's influence. Talgat Tadjuddinov, Head of the Ufa-based Central Spiritual Board of Muslims of Russia (TsDUMR), has been loyal to Moscow and critical of Tatarstan's drive towards greater autonomy. However, Tadjuddinov has been accused of corruption and an antidemocratic style of work. In opposition to Tadjuddinov, Shaimiev supported

¹¹⁴ Valerii A. Tishkov, 'New Russian Passports Must Silence Ethnic Rancour', *Moscow Times*, 9 December 1997.

¹¹⁵ Gulnara Khasanova, 'Language and Sovereignty: the Politics of Switching to the Latin Alphabet in Tatarstan', *Jamestown Foundation Prism*, vol.3, no.16, 10 October 1997. For the officially endorsed version of Latin alphabet for Tatar, see R. G. Valitova and S. G. Vagizov, *Latin Khareflere belan yazu hem uku*, Kazan: Magarif, 1997.

Tatarstan's Mufti Gusman Iskhakov since February 1998. Relying on the backing of Shaimiev, Mufti Iskhakov has introduced new registration rules for the Islamic communities on the territory of Tatarstan, which has allowed him to impose his jurisdiction over the formerly Ufa-related Islamic communities. Although Tadjuddinov claims control over 470 Islamic communities in Tatarstan, 1200 Islamic communities are registered with the Muftiat of Tatarstan.¹¹⁷ These registration requirements of Iskhakov limited the Moscow-backed Tadjuddinov's religious authority over the Muslim population of Tatarstan.

Economic Crisis and the Tatar Factor in Russian Politics (1998-1999)

Tatarstan's relations with Moscow were seriously effected by the outbreak of a financial crisis in 1998, which was triggered, according to Philip Hanson, by the increasing dependence of both the federal centre and the regions on foreign capital in order to finance their budget deficits.¹¹⁸ The 1998 financial crisis had a major impact on Tatarstan's relations with Moscow because some of Tatarstan's banks and joint-stock companies invested their funds in short-term federal government bonds before the crisis. Moscow's decision to freeze all of their funds created a shortage of funds in Tatarstan. Consequently, Tatarstan's relations with foreign investors have stopped.

To overcome the short-term negative impacts of the economic crisis, Prime Minister Rustem Minnekhanov unveiled his measures on 10 September 1998. These measures included the introduction of fixed prices for basic products, the ban on their dispatch from the Republic and the introduction of commodity credits for local producers as well as for the purchase of medicine and other vital food products. Moreover, Tatarstan as the largest producer of vodka in Russia created a vodka monopoly, Tatspirom. In addition, Tatarstan reneged on its short-term bond obligations. Another financial measure was to force all companies in which the Republican government has a 25 percent stake to transfer their accounts to AkBars Bank, which is controlled by Shaimiev's associates.

¹¹⁶ Sarah Karush, 'Tatars Leave Russian Alphabet Behind', *Moscow Times*, 14 October 1999.

¹¹⁷ Galina M. Yemelianova, 'New Muftis, New Russians?' *Jamestown Foundation Prism*, vol.5, no.16, 27 August 1999.

AkBars Bank as the largest bank in Tatarstan was also authorised to hold the gold reserves of Tatarstan. Besides, the National Bank of Tatarstan was given the task of making Tatarstan's banks larger through merging some smaller banks.¹¹⁹

Overall, the financial crisis of 1998 demonstrated the economic dependence of Tatarstan on Moscow once again. The fiscal situation got worse for Tatarstan in 1999, when the Federal Ministry of Finance developed a new method to distribute subsidies which stipulated that thirteen regions, including Tatarstan, should receive no subsidies. Moreover, Moscow banks such as Sberbank gained leverage over the Tatarstan government by demanding conditions for restructuring Tatarstan's debt loads. The natural monopolies, Unified Energy System (which controls electricity generation and distribution), Gazprom (natural gas extraction and distribution), the Railroads Ministry, and Transneft (oil distribution pipeline), also increased their influence in Tatarstan's economy since they set prices for and control access to vital energy supplies or transportation routes.

In the political field, Tatarstan's leadership started to develop good relations with the federal politicians in the aftermath of the August 1998 financial crisis. When El'tsin agreed to replace Prime Minister Sergei Kirienko, who had served just for six months, with Evgenii Primakov, who was favoured by El'tsin's opponents in the Duma on 11 September 1998, Tatarstan's leadership supported Primakov strongly. Primakov had a very positive approach towards Tatarstan too. For example, Primakov named Shaimiev's close friend Ramazan Abdulatipov to run the Ministry for Nationalities Affairs on 25 September 1998. Despite this, Tatarstan's leadership adopted itself easily to the changes in the federal leadership when Primakov was replaced by Sergei Stepashin in May 1999.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Philip Hanson, 'The Russian Economic Crisis and the Future of Russian Economic Reform', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.51, no.7, 1999, pp.1154-1157.

¹¹⁹ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Tatarstan Launches Haphazard Anti-Crisis Measures', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.3, no.36, 13 September 1998.

¹²⁰ A similar attitude was also taken even before the outbreak of the economic crisis when El'tsin replaced Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin with Sergei Kirienko in March 1998. Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Kazan Sorry to See Primakov Go, Backs Stepashin', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.4, no.19, 20 May 1999.

Tatarstan's strategy of developing good relations with Moscow was necessitated by its need to renew the validity of the agreement on inter-budgetary relations for five years in 1999. Although Tatarstan's leadership wanted to renew the agreement in its 1994 form, the political situation was not to its own advantage, because there were no strong anti-Moscow Tatar ethnic nationalist movement in the Republic, and El'tsin developed working relations with the Russian parliament. Furthermore, Tatarstan's leadership was not able to build a coalition with other regional leaders in order to exert pressure on Moscow. Not surprisingly, the framework agreement on 'Budgetary Relations', which was signed by Shaimiev and Primakov on 17 March 1999, was on Moscow's terms.¹²¹ In order to pressurise Moscow into giving more concessions to Tatarstan, Shaimiev underscored the value of having good relations with Tatarstan, which is a donor republic. Shaimiev even hinted that ethnic nationalism of the Tatars could also be used against Moscow.

Tatarstan is a donor republic. It gives much more than it receives. If Russia did not prolong the treaty, our parliament would have refused to contribute to the central budget. I would not have liked to approve this scenario. The Tatars are the largest ethnic group in Russia. We do not like to say it, but we know it - and so does Moscow.¹²²

Despite this rhetoric, however, Tatarstan simply bowed to the pressures of Moscow, which gained some more exclusive powers in fiscal matters including the authority to collect taxes in Tatarstan in April 1999. Moscow also increased its influence in Tatarstan's automobile industry, when the Federal Minister of Economics became the *ex officio* Chairperson of the Board of Directors of KamAZ.¹²³

In response to the growing power of Moscow, Tatarstan's parliament created the Republican Security Council in order to protect the Republican sovereignty, constitution and legal system as well as the human rights of Tatarstan's peoples. In addition, Shaimiev sought to become one of the key political figures at the federal level. For this purpose, he joined forces with Moscow Mayor Iurii Luzhkov, St. Petersburg Governor Vladimir Iakovlev and the former Prime Minister Evgenii Primakov for the December 1999 State Duma elections. Their coalition resulted in the formation of the Fatherland-All Russia

¹²¹ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Shaimiev Overestimates Value of Agreement', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.4, no.11, 25 March 1999.

¹²² Andrew Jack, 'Tatarstan: A Model Republic', *Financial Times*, 30 April 1999.

(OVR - *Otechestvo-Vsia Rossiia*) bloc against the Kremlin.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, the OVR was unable to win the 19 December 1999 State Duma elections. According to the results of these elections, the Communists became the biggest party in the Russian Parliament by getting 24.29 percent of the votes, while the Kremlin-backed Unity (*Edinstvo*) came in second place overall with 23.32 percent of the votes, and the OVR alliance was third with 13.33 percent (See Table A3.16).¹²⁵

The Shaimiev factor could also be seen in this election in Tatarstan, where 40.1 percent of the electorate voted for the party of Shaimiev, the OVR bloc, while CPRF was second with 18.1 percent, to be followed by Unity that received 15.7 percent. Iabloko and LDPR's votes were below five percent (See Table A3.16). Three OVR candidates won the elections in three districts (Fandas Safiullin, Oleg Morozov and Fliura Ziiatdinova). Only the Communist candidate, Salimkhan Akhmetkhanov, and incumbent State Duma Deputy, Sergei Shashurin from Sergei Baburin's the Russian National Union, won the elections against the pro-Shaimiev candidates from the OVR (See Table A3.17). Needless to say the 1999 Russian parliamentary elections in Tatarstan were far from being democratic. Even though there is a Republican legislation prohibiting state agencies from collecting signatures in support of electoral blocs, parties or individual candidates in Tatarstan, the Kazan City Labour and Employment Centre collected signatures for the OVR because Shaimiev was one of OVR's leaders.

El'tsin's decision to resign from the Presidency of the Russian Federation, and to nominate Vladimir Putin as the Acting President on 31 December 1999 constituted a turning point in Tatarstan's relations with Moscow. Although this thesis is limited to study the El'tsin period between 1992 and 1999, Chapter Five will explore Putin's policies towards Tatarstan in order to test the stability of the El'tsin era intergovernmental relations between Tatarstan and Moscow and interethnic relations between Russians and Tatars.

¹²³ *Tatar-Inform*, 5 April 1999.

¹²⁴ John Thornhill, 'Shaimiev Alligns Himself with Enemy No.1', *Financial Times*, 6 August 1999, p.2.

¹²⁵ Danielle Lussier, '1999 State Duma Results Communist Power on the Decline, OVR Could be the Swing', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.4, no.48, 22 December 1999.

Conclusions

To conclude, Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* has played an important role in Tatarstan's relations with Moscow both before and after the signing of the Power-Sharing Treaty in 1994. We could argue that Shaimiev's pragmatic approach towards Moscow enabled Tatarstan's leadership to enlarge the autonomy of the Republic and to secure stability in Tatarstan. Moreover, Tatarstan's status in the Russian Federation was redefined to the advantage of the Republican leadership. Above all, due to this approach Moscow's concessions to Tatarstan enabled the Republican leadership to maintain their political power and to gain control of Tatarstan's economy.

This chapter has also shown that when the Russian federal centre in Moscow started to renegotiate its relations with Tatarstan, it became evident that post-Soviet Russia, in contrast to the departing Soviet imperial power, lacked the imperial coercive force backed by the Tatar elites. It was therefore unable to impose its policies on Tatarstan unilaterally. In this post-imperial context, Tatarstan's leadership has succeeded in securing Moscow's accommodation of its pragmatic version of Tatar nationalism through the institutional arrangements of the 1994 Power-Sharing Treaty.

The analysis of the 1994 Power-Sharing Treaty between Tatarstan and Moscow has demonstrated that the Treaty has made Tatarstan largely self-governing. Thanks to the Treaty, Tatarstan gained the formal right to define its own structure of government, to elect its own president and legislature, to adopt its own laws, to collect all taxes on its territory and to have economic and political links with other republics and regions and with foreign governments. Apart from the symbolic fact that the adjective 'state' precedes the name of every institution in Tatarstan, the Republic also benefits from the material advantages of the enhanced status of Tatarstan. For example, Tatarstan's main oil company Tatneft gains revenues from the Republican privilege in exporting oil, which was allowed by the Treaty.

From the perspective of Moscow, however, the Treaty with Tatarstan demonstrated the weakness of the federal centre in extending the Russian state authority throughout Russia. Moscow admitted in this Treaty that the federal leadership had a limited control over

Tatarstan, which is formally a part of the federal territory and the Tatars, who constitute a part of Russia's polity. Moscow also admitted the fact that federal taxes that are collected in Tatarstan, may or may not make their way into the federal treasury depending on the goodwill of Tatarstan's leadership. These limitations of Moscow demonstrated the symptoms weakness of state capacity at the federal level.

Concerning the ethnic nationalists in Tatarstan, Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* played a crucial role in monopolising the discourse on Tatar national interests. Shaimiev's pragmatic approach to the nationalities question in Tatarstan enabled him to pose as the defender of not only the Tatars but also non-Tatar peoples of the Republic, while he was able to depict Moscow as too corrupt to make Tatarstan's leadership accountable. While radical Tatar ethnic nationalist movement is weak, Shaimiev emerged as the main person in Tatarstan that could check the growth of Tatar nationalism. Seeking to co-opt the loyal Tatar ethnic nationalists, the Shaimiev leadership succeeded in transforming the street protests of Tatar ethnic nationalists into a loyal parliamentary opposition with a nationalist agenda against the periodic pressures of Moscow. Shaimiev refrained from 'playing the ethnic card' against Moscow and the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan, as demanded by the Tatar ethnic nationalists, because this could very likely would have led to interethnic violence. Had significant violence broken out, it would have been difficult to contain, and might very well have provoked military intervention by Moscow.

All in all, Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* enabled Tatarstan's leadership to benefit from Moscow's post-Soviet weakness, which forced Moscow to accept considerable autonomy for Tatarstan. Apart from the weakness of Moscow, the weaknesses of Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms in Tatarstan also contributed to the relative success of the Shaimiev leadership in maintaining its political power and gaining economic wealth.

In chapter four, we will examine the nature of society and culture in Tatarstan in order to account for the weak social support among the Tatars and the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan for ethnic nationalism.

4. Society and Culture in Tatarstan: The Weakness of Ethnic Nationalist Movements

Having examined Tatarstan's relations with Moscow in the previous chapter, we will now explore Tatarstan's socio-cultural characteristics that influence the level of the support for ethnic nationalist movements in Tatarstan. The study of the support for the Republican ethnic nationalist movements in Tatarstan is important, since it is the strength or the weakness of the support for ethnic nationalisms that determines the autonomy of Tatarstan's leadership from the ethnically-organised social forces in Tatarstan. While the strength of ethnic nationalism diminishes the autonomy of the Republican leadership, the weakness of ethnic nationalism increases their autonomy. Thus, the success of Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* necessitates that all ethnic groups should not rely on their own power or on Moscow, but rather on the Republican leadership for their survival.

In this context, the study of the socio-cultural characteristics of the society in Tatarstan would enable us to investigate in what ways socio-cultural factors limit the social support for ethnic nationalism.¹ The majority of the works in the literature on nationalist movements in Tatarstan have exaggerated the strength of ethnic nationalism, especially Tatar ethnic nationalism. Some scholars such as Marie Bennigsen-Broxup argued that the Tatars differed from the Russians in terms of religion and culture, and that this establishes the basis for ethnic polarisation in the Republic.² Bennigsen-Broxup seems to have exaggerated the ethnic mobilisation potential of the Tatars. In reality, however, inter-ethnic violence has never reached a significant level in Tatarstan. Moreover, not all of the Tatars are committed ethnic

¹ Geoff Eley and Ronald G. Suny, 'Introduction: From the Moment of Social History to the Work of Cultural Representation', in *Becoming National*, eds. Geoff Eley and Ronald G. Suny, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, p.9.

² Marie Bennigsen-Broxup, 'The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia: Tatarstan and the North Caucasus', in *Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Soviet Union: Domestic and International Dynamics*, ed. Mohiaddin Mesbahi, Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1994, p.75.

nationalists, and significant numbers of the Tatars maintain a critical view of Tatar ethnic nationalism. In this respect, Valerii Tishkov went further and even accused Tatarstan's leadership of promoting Tatar ethnic nationalism. Tishkov identified the ethnic nationalist credentials of Tatarstan's leadership as follows:

The most striking example is the Republic of Tatarstan. Here the ruling elite employed Tatar ethnonationalism, radically expressed by ultra-nationalist organisations and local intellectuals, to establish a firm and indisputable political order based on titular representation.³

Tishkov appears to have mistakenly equated Tatarstan's leadership with the Tatar ethnic nationalists in the Republic.

This chapter argues that the readiness of the Tatars and the Russians to be mobilised behind ethnic nationalist movements has been limited enormously by the socio-cultural characteristics of Tatarstan, which could be related to the legacy of the Russian and Soviet imperial rule in Tatarstan. The organisational and ideological divides within the Tatar and Russian nationalist movements made them vulnerable to the manipulations of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership, which has pursued a policy of divide and rule towards Tatarstan's population. Besides, the non-antagonistic character of the self/other perceptions of the Tatars and the Russians, the high levels of religious tolerance, bilingualism, mixed marriages and urbanisation as well as the state-dependent economy and a weak civil society have both undermined the institutional bases of ethnic mobilisation among the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan, and increased their dependence on Tatarstan's leadership for their socio-economic survival.

To begin with, the chapter will examine the historical experience of the Tatars and the Russians under the Russian Imperial and Soviet rules. Afterwards, we will explore the polarisation of the Russian 'democrats' against Tatar 'ethnic nationalists' in late Soviet Tataria. Next, the weakness of ethnic nationalist movements in post-Soviet Tatarstan will be examined. Furthermore, the chapter will compare the Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms in Tatarstan with other nationalist movements in the post-Soviet world. In the remaining part of the chapter, we will analyse the sources of the weak support for

³ Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, (hereafter, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict*), London: Sage, 1997, p.242.

Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms in Tatarstan by focusing on the self/other perceptions of the Tatars and the Russians, in addition to religion, language use, mixed marriages, urbanisation, economy and civil society.

Historical Experience: The Tatars and the Russians under Russian Imperial and Soviet Rule

The Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan are both united and divided by their common historical experiences under Russian Imperial and Soviet rule. The Tatars have been living together with the ethnic Russians since the Russian conquest of the Kazan Khanate in 1552, a historic milestone that marks the beginning of Russian imperial expansion. The fact that Russia's territorial expansion was on land makes it very difficult for researchers to differentiate between an imperial ruling group and subject peoples. This sets the Russian Empire apart from the Western European maritime empires of the past in which the metropolis was clearly separate from the colonies. Furthermore, the Russian Empire not only incorporated the non-Russian elites into its nobility, but it also sent ordinary Russians to the newly conquered regions in order to mix the ethnic composition of the colonised society. In fact, lower-class Russians have felt the burden of Russia's imperial expansion as much as the Tatars, because ethnic Russian serfs lived in conditions that were for the most part worse than the living conditions of the Tatar peasants. It is basically this high level of Russian penetration into the Tatar community that prevents Moscow from pulling out and 'sailing away home' when it was faced with problems involving the Tatar ethnic nationalists.⁴

The development of the relations between Moscow, the Tatar elites and the Tatar masses shaped the Tatar historical experience in the Russian Empire. The Russian Empire justified the conquest of the Kazan Khanate and its Tatar population in terms of the Russian messianic ideology, which required the Russian rulers to convert the Tatars to Orthodox Christianity. In line with this ideology, the Tatar cultural symbols in Kazan including the Kul Sherif Mosque were destroyed. In 1556-1562, the Annunciation Cathedral was built in place of the Kul Sherif Mosque. Ivan the Terrible simultaneously

⁴ Anatol Lieven, 'Nightmare in the Caucasus', *Washington Quarterly*, vol.23, no.1, 2000, p.145.

built the St. Basil's Cathedral on the Red Square in Moscow as a symbol of the victory of Russian Orthodoxy over the Tatars.⁵ At the symbolic level, these developments can be said to have marked the cultural boundaries between the Tatars and the Russians, which created some symbolic material to be used by ethnic nationalists for ethnic mobilisation.

The Russian imperial policies of mixing the Tatars with other ethnic groups and dividing them at the same time along territorial, ethnic and other cleavages made it easier for Moscow to rule the Tatars. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the Tatar-speaking people had not yet adopted the Tatar ethnonym. In this period, the Tatars were confused with Turkic peoples, while being sub-divided into several groupings. The Russian Empire described these peoples as *inorodtsy* (those of another kin), while the Mongols and the Turkic peoples east of the river Volga were referred to as Tatars.⁶ Gradually, the label 'Tatar' was extended to denote all those professing Islam, Turkic or non-Turkic, such as the peoples of the Northern Caucasus. In doing so, the Russian Empire effectively treated Muslims in Russia as if they constituted one single nation.⁷

Moscow's inability to differentiate the Tatars from the other Muslim peoples of the Russian Empire was partly due to the differences among the dialects spoken by the Tatars. Although the Middle (Kazan) Tatar was in literary use, there were also the Western (Misher) Tatar and the Eastern (Siberian) Tatar dialects. Apart from these groups, there were also Kasymov, Teptiar and Kriashen Tatars, who came into being as a result of historical development. The Kasymov Tatars were those Tatars who had migrated from the Kazan Khanate to Riazan under the leadership of Kasym Khan in the fifteenth century. Another Tatar group emerged as a result of migration in the sixteenth century, when the Russian conquest of the Kazan Khanate led the Teptiar Tatars to migrate to Bashkiriia. Finally, the Kriashen Tatars emerged when some Tatars converted

⁵ Sahni Kalpana, *Crucifying the Orient: Russian Orientalism and the Colonisation of Caucasus and Central Asia*, Bangkok: White Orchid Press, 1997, pp.3-18.

⁶ John W. Slocum, 'Who and When were the Inorodtsy? The Evolution of the Category of "Aliens" in Imperial Russia', *Russian Review*, vol.57, no.2, 1998, p.174.

⁷ Michael Khodarkovsky, "'Ignoble Savages and Unfaithful Subjects": Constructing Non-Christian Identities in Early Modern Russia', in *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917*, eds. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997, p.19.

to Christianity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Over time, the name 'Tatar' came to denote all of these ethnic groups.⁸

Both Russian and Tatar nationalisms started to take shape in the nineteenth century. The first systematic formulation of Russian nationalism, *Slavophilism*, is rooted in the desire to create an alternative to Western civilisation. Russian nationalism intensified with the abolition of serfdom in 1861 when the newly-emancipated ethnic Russian peasants started to bring their anti-outsider sentiments to cities. Consequently, the Russian Assembly (*Russkoe Sobranie*) was established in 1900, followed by the formation of the Russian Monarchist Party and the Union of the Russian People (also known as the Black Hundreds) in 1905.⁹ The rise of Tatar nationalism in the nineteenth century was a reflection of the Tatar resentment of their second-class status in the Russian Empire. Furthermore, the imperial shift towards a pan-Slavic ideology intensified the cultural divide between the Tatars and the Russians.¹⁰

Although the Tatar nationalists were unsuccessful in benefiting from the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, the Bolshevik revolution heightened the Tatar hopes for being treated equally. The Soviet ideology stressed that all Soviet nations were equal, and the Soviet Union attempted to justify its policies through achieving the political, economic and cultural equality of the Soviet nations. Soviet rule in Tataria improved the material conditions of the Tatars as compared to their conditions under the Russian Empire, despite the Soviet suppression of any kind of political dissent of the Tatar elites.

Soviet rule in the TASSR could be seen as an imperial, non-Russian and modernising rule. Soviet rule was imperial because the Soviet State subordinated the Tatar nation to its rule not through the voluntary participation of the Tatars but through the centralising

⁸ The Volga Tatars are distinct from the Crimean Tatars, who have never lived together with the Volga Tatars under the same state structure since the collapse of the Golden Horde. Azade-Aybe Rorlich, 'One or More Tatar Nations', in *Muslim Communities Re-emerge: Historical Perspectives on Nationality, Politics, and Opposition in the Former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia*, ed. Edward Allworth, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994, p.62.

⁹ Robert J. Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, pp.37-43.

¹⁰ Edward J. Lazzerini, 'Defining the Orient: A Nineteenth Century Russo-Tatar Polemic over Identity and Cultural Representation', in *Muslim Communities Re-emerge: Historical Perspectives on Nationality, Politics, and Opposition in the Former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia*, ed. Edward Allworth, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994, pp.36-37.

institution of the CPSU.¹¹ Soviet rule cannot be considered as a version of Russian rule, since the dominant ideology was Soviet communism rather than the Russian imperial ideology. Finally, Soviet rule had a modernising effect since the Soviet rulers not only improved the living conditions of the Tatars through promoting the processes of urbanisation and industrialisation in the TASSR, but also created an educated Tatar elite, and indeed provided mass education to the Tatars in Tatarstan in their own native language.

Despite the material benefits of Soviet rule to the Tatars, Soviet rule has not eliminated the remaining socio-cultural basis for Tatar nationalism. According to Sergei Kondrashov, although the Soviet system was effective in eroding the boundaries of ethnic, class and territorial groups in Soviet Tataria, the Tatars continued to perceive their status as being 'inferior' to the Russians. For Kondrashov, the rise of Tatar nationalism in the late 1980s is linked to the nature of the Soviet-era socio-cultural modernisation, which resulted from the complex processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and demography.¹²

The Soviet process of industrialisation in Tataria started in the late 1920s and went through three stages. The first stage was between 1928 to 1946, when an industrial area was created in the mainly urban Russian-populated Kazan-Zelenodol'sk region for the industries of machinery, chemicals and power. The second stage started in 1946 with the discovery of oil in the Shugurovskoe region. The period between 1946 and 1965 witnessed the development of an oil industry in the mainly Tatar-populated regions in the southeast and northeast such as the regions of Al'met'evsk and Bugulma. The final stage of industrialisation started in 1965 and covered the period up to the present when the mainly Tatar-populated Nizhnekamsk-Naberezhnye Chelny region was formed with the construction of the largest heavy truck manufacturing plant in the USSR, KamAZ, in the city of Naberezhnye Chelny.¹³

¹¹ Abdurakhman Avtorkhanov, *Imperiia Kremliia: Sovetskii tip kolonializma*, Vilnius: IMOI, 1990, pp.149-153.

¹² Sergei Kondrashov, *Nationalism and the Drive for Sovereignty in Tatarstan, 1988-92: Origins and Development*, (hereafter, *Nationalism and the Drive for Sovereignty in Tatarstan*), London: Macmillan, 2000, p.50.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp.2-3.

The process of urbanisation in Tataria also contributed to the modernisation of the Republic. The data on the dynamics of urbanisation between 1920 and 1989 show that in 1920, 16.1 percent of the urban population was composed of Tatars, 78.6 percent of Russians while others constituted the remaining 5.3 percent. In 1989, Tatars formed 42.2 percent of the urban population, while Russians formed 50.8 percent with others forming 7.0 percent.¹⁴ In general, Tatars were significantly less urbanised than Russians, who had an 86 percent level of urbanisation as compared to 63 percent among Tatars.¹⁵

In his analysis of the dynamics of the ethnic composition of Tatarstan between 1920 and 1989, Damir Iskhakov shows that the immigration of Russians and Ukrainians, especially after the discovery of oil in 1946, led to a slight fall in the proportion of ethnic Tatars in Tataria. Between 1926 and 1989, the percentage of the Tatars declined from 48.9 to 48.5 while the percentage of the Russians increased from 43.2 to 43.3.¹⁶ Moreover, the population growth among the Tatars was not high compared to the other nationalities, the Tatar share of the total Soviet population declined from 2.4 percent to 2.3 percent.¹⁷

These ethno-demographic trends led to the integration of the ethnic Tatars into the Russian society in Tataria, since they undermined the system of ethnic segregation. For example, between 1972 and 1989, more than 65 percent of the Tatars in Tatarstan had achieved a higher social status than their parents.¹⁸ Although the Tatars relatively benefited from the Soviet modernisation, uneven economic development in Tataria and the existence of a socio-cultural order in which the Russians were more privileged as compared to the Tatars sowed the seeds of modern Tatar nationalism. Kondrashov believes that there has been no significant reaction on the part of the Tatars against this inequality, since most urban Tatars found it in their best interests to accept their second-rate status.¹⁹ Kondrashov's analysis echoes Michael Hechter's argument that modernisation and the emerging inequalities between the regions in a country relegate peripheral regions to an inferior position, leaving the core region dominant. In such a

¹⁴ Damir M. Iskhakov, 'Sotsial'naia statistika', in *Sovremennye natsional'nye protsessy v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Damir M. Iskhakov and Rozalina N. Musina, Kazan: IILII KNTs RAN, 1992, p.129.

¹⁵ Marat R. Mustafin, 'Natsional'nyi vopros v zerkale statistiki', *Sovetskaia Tataria*, 16 March 1990.

¹⁶ Iskhakov, 'Sotsial'naia statistika', p.128.

¹⁷ Damir M. Iskhakov, *Tatary: Populiarnyi ocherk etnicheskoi istorii i demografii*, Naberezhnye Chelny: KamAZ, 1993, pp.18-21.

¹⁸ Vladimir Shlapentokh, Munir Sendich and Emil Pain, *The New Russian Diaspora: Russian Minorities in the Former Soviet Republics*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994. p. 47.

situation of internal colonialism, a cultural division of labour emerges among ethnic groups, with the core group occupying the best class positions and the peripheral groups the inferior positions.²⁰

The Soviet socio-economic order in Tataria started to experience its own crisis of legitimacy after the mid-sixties when the post-Second World War processes of integration started to be reversed. In this period, some of the urban white-collar Tatar elites achieved status equality and demanded greater benefits for themselves. In fact, as indigenous expectations rise, a growing sense of relative deprivation becomes more likely.²¹ These developments contributed to the growth of Tatar national awareness. Venera Iakupova stated this as follows:

It is very easy for a Tatar to become a nationalist in the USSR. One just need to attend history classes at school, when, at the description of the horrors of the Tatar-Mongol invasion, the whole class turns to look at you; watch films in which glorious Russians perish at the hands of savage Tatars; get used to the idea that the Volga is the Great Russian river, that it is Russian woods that surround you; take part every year in the festivals of seeing off the Russian winter... What can a Tatar can be proud of? Squalid Kazan? KamAZ which was built by the whole country? Where is that something to be proud of, to love? Of the musical treasures of the Tatars only the *garmoshka* (accordion) has survived, of the national dress – only the *tiubeteika*, of the literature – only books that nobody can read.²²

Meanwhile, as with Tatar nationalism, there was also a rise in Russian nationalism in the post-Stalin era, as some Russian intellectuals started to air their dissatisfaction with the burden of the Soviet Empire. The Soviet attempts to harness Russian national identity to the official communist ideology through the journals *Veche*, *Molodaia gvardiia*, *Moskva* and *Nash sovremennik* were largely ineffective in curbing the popularity of non-Soviet Russian national identity, which was seen by John Dunlop as a challenge to the monopoly of national Bolsheviks.²³ Dunlop identified the *vozrozhdentsy*, who called for the revival Russian culture against the domination of the Soviet culture, and the National Bolsheviks, who believed in the strength of the Soviet state as the two main tendencies in

¹⁹ Kondrashov, *Nationalism and the Drive for Sovereignty in Tatarstan*, pp.44-46.

²⁰ Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536–1966*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.

²¹ Rasma Karklins, *Ethnic Relations in the USSR: The Perspective from Below*, Boston: Allen&Unwin, 1986, p.150.

²² Venera A. Iakupova, 'Pokushenie na internatsionalizm', *Komsomolets Tatarii*, 2 September 1990.

²³ John B. Dunlop, *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983, pp. 242-273

Russian nationalism. Alexander Yanov, however, argued that both anti- and pro-Soviet versions of Russian nationalism could degenerate into aggressive chauvinism.²⁴ Stephen Carter combined these two positions, and categorised Russian nationalists in terms of their views of democracy. Carter argued that since Russian nationalism is full of diverse traditions, the process of democratisation could have a divisive impact on the Russian nationalist movement.²⁵

In fact, the process of democratisation, which was initiated by Gorbachev's reforms, resulted in the growth of both Russian and Tatar national consciousness outside the control of Moscow. Although the Tatars resented the inferior status of their community and culture, for the translation of their cultural symbols into resources of ethnic mobilisation, they needed to have their own political organisations. In fact, the development of Tatar nationalism can be better understood by looking at the interplay between the elites and the masses as mediated by the existing political institutions.

Russian 'Democrats' vs. Tatar 'Ethnic Nationalists' in Late Soviet Tataria

Although openly ethnic-based nationalist movements were difficult to form in the Soviet Union, this does not signify an absence of interethnic conflict especially since such conflicts did emerge and often took the form of gang fighting in Soviet Tataria. For example, the *Tiap-Liap* gang, whose participants engaged in the killings of several store managers and other representatives of the black market, was formed in the late 1970s. Each gang group had its own clearly delineated spheres, especially in Kazan's working-class districts of Teplokontrol and Zhilploshchadka. These gang fightings became very serious after the start of Gorbachev's reforms in the late 1980s.²⁶ Walter L. Hixson, who was an eyewitness of the ethnic situation in Kazan during the Gorbachev period, described the significance of these gang fightings in his book, *Witness to Disintegration* (1993) as follows:

²⁴ Alexander Yanov, *The Russian New Right: Right Wing Ideologies in the Contemporary USSR*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988, pp.1-20.

²⁵ Stephen K. Carter, *Russian Nationalism: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, London: Pinter, 1991, pp.119-146.

After years of relative calm in Kazan, *perestroika* and then the political disintegration of the USSR ignited long dormant ethnic tensions between Tatars and Russians. So far, those tensions have been expressed non-violently for the most part –some clashes have occurred but nothing like the conflicts in the Caucasus between Azerbaijanis and Armenians or Georgians and Ossetians. Nevertheless the nascent Tatar-Russian tensions are unsettling to both groups, especially in Kazan where they must live and work together in roughly equal numbers.²⁷

The process of ethnic mobilisation in Soviet Tataria started to gain momentum with the *perestroika* reforms. The national problems of the Tatars provided some Tatar activists an opportunity to back their Republican leaders and to air their grievances against Moscow. The Tatar ethnic mobilisation started to take shape when *perestroika* reforms allowed a variety of informal (*neformal'nye*) political organisations to appear. Gorbachev expected that these organisations could mobilise civic support for *perestroika* reforms. The Tatar Popular Front for *Perestroika* channelled these protests into demands for greater openness in the Soviet system.²⁸ Although the Front aimed to unite the pro-reform groups, both Tatar and Russian, in the TASSR against the conservatives in Moscow, the common ground between Tatars and Russians quickly eroded, as the ethnic Russians started to focus on the democratisation of the Soviet Union, while the ethnic Tatars embarked on defending their ethnic rights. This disagreement set the Russian 'democrats' against the Tatar 'ethnic nationalists'.

Initially, the target of the Russian 'democratic' social mobilisation was the environmental problems of Tataria. For this purpose, two environmentalist groups, *Druzhina* and *Ekologicheskii klub*, were formed in Kazan during 1987. The battle against the Tatar Atomic Energy Station whose construction began in 1983 was very important for the environmentalists. While the station was located over 100 kilometres from Kazan in the town of Kamskaia Poliana, the environmentalists led by Albert Garapov were active mainly in Kazan. Recognising the popularity of the anti-nuclear movement, the Tatar Supreme Soviet issued a decree on 4 October 1989 calling on the USSR authorities to discontinue the construction of the Tatar Atomic Energy Station. Bowing to these

²⁶ Vladimir Sotnikov, *Glavari banditskikh klanov*, Minsk: Literatura, 1997, pp.427-441.

²⁷ Walter L. Hixson, *Witness to Disintegration: Provincial Life in the Last Year of the USSR*, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1993, p.116.

²⁸ 'Narodnogo Fronta TASSR v podderzhki perestroiki', *Vecherniaia Kazan*, 30 November 1988.

pressures, the Soviet authorities agreed to this call and decided to convert the facility into a conventional heating station.²⁹

Gradually, the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan started to ally with the 'democrats' in Moscow, who were united around Boris El'tsin. They established the Tatar branch of Nikolai Travkin's Democratic Party of Russia. In its first Congress, the delegates elected Rashit Akhmetov as the Chairperson of the Tatarstan branch of the Democratic Party of Russia in 1990. Aleksandr Salagaev formed the *Grazhdanskii soiuz* (Civic Union) in order to unite the other small-scale Russian 'democratic' organisations with the Democratic Party of Russia. The most powerful of these small-scale organisations was the Tatarstan branch of the People's Party of Free Russia, which was chaired by Vladimir Beliaev. Another Russian umbrella organisation was the Movement for Democratic Reforms of Tatarstan (*Dvizhenie demokraticeskikh reform Tatarstana*). Its principal constituent, in addition to a number of other liberal oriented small-scale Russian organisations, was *Soglasie* (Accord).³⁰

Apart from these 'democratic' ethnic Russians, there were also Russian ethnic nationalist groups in Tatarstan. Their organisations included the Slavic Club (*Slavianskii klub*) and Vladimir Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, whose chairperson in Tatarstan was Valerii Gordeev. These Russian ethnic nationalist organisations focused their activities on promoting Russian culture in Tatarstan, while opposing the rise of Tatar ethnic nationalism in the Republic.³¹

The 'democratic' agenda of the Russian movements was not attractive for the Tatar activists who were mainly interested in forging a movement for greater autonomy for the Republic. The fact that the Tatar elites were influential in cultural organisations, universities and the local state gave them access to cultural resources for ethnic mobilisation. Gradually, Tatars began to complain about the treatment of the Tatar draftees in the Soviet military, about the lack of opportunity for Tatar children to be educated in their native language and about the under-representation of the Tatars in the

²⁹ Jane I. Dawson, *Eco-Nationalism: Anti-nuclear Activism and National Identity in Russia, Lithuania, and Ukraine*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996, pp.137-140.

³⁰ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, *et.al.*, *Politicheskaiia sistema Respubliki Tatarstan*, Kazan: KGU, 1995, pp.29-30.

USSR Council of Nationalities and other Soviet institutions in Moscow.³² In addition to the *Tugan Yak* (Motherland), the *Mardzhani Society* and the *Saf Islam* (Pure Islam) came into existence in this period. These organisations, however, were too small to become the basis for a popular movement.³³

The Tatar intellectuals formed TOTs (Tatar Public Centre) in September 1988 in order to unite the communist and nationalist Tatar factions under a national front. At its first congress in February 1989, Marat Muliukov, a historian at Kazan University, was elected as the first chairperson of TOTs. Although it was claimed that the TOTs gained a membership of 100,000 in a very short span of time, this figure seems to be exaggerated given the lack of a strong popular support for Tatar ethnic nationalism among the Tatars in Tatarstan.³⁴ The intellectuals constituted over half of the delegates at the first two congresses of TOTs. The founders of TOTs were mainly based at the Tatar Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the Kazan State University. The cultural intelligentsia joined the movement because they believed that the Tatar culture was in decline and that this decline could be reversed through a nationalist mobilisation. They targeted mainly the urban population, particularly those living in Kazan and Naberezhnye Chelny, as their potential support base.

Modelled on the 'popular front' organisations in the Baltic republics, TOTs was moderate in its program demanding greater economic autonomy (a self-financing economy), the establishment of formal political links with the Tatar Diaspora and the use of Tatar language in schools. It also demanded greater protection for Tatar culture and that Tatarstan be made a union republic.³⁵

In March 1990, a radical nationalist group, the *Ittifak* (Alliance) National Party, was established and began to challenge TOTs for leadership of the nationalist movement. After being organised in ten cities and fourteen villages in Tatarstan, *Ittifak* and its youth

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.29-30.

³² Rafael F. Mukhammetdinov, 'Demokratizatsiia nachinaetsia s dekolonizatsii', *Vecherniaia Kazan*, 6 August 1988.

³³ Nadir Devlet, 'The Tatars and Bashkirs after Glasnost', *Journal of Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol.10, no.2, 1989, p.465.

³⁴ 'Tezisy k podgotovke platformy Tatarskogo obshchestvennogo tsentra', *Central Asian and Caucasian Chronicle*, vol.8, no.2, 1989, pp.5-9.

³⁵ Damir M. Iskhakov, 'TOTs Programma i deistviia', *Kommunist Tatarii*, no.7, 1990, pp.38-44.

organisation, *Azatlyk* (Freedom) held their founding conferences in October 1990. At this conference, Rafael Mukhameddinov became the founding chairperson of the party.³⁶

Ittifak's version of Tatar ethnic nationalism took shape when the first Congress (*Kurultai*) held in April 1991 adopted the party programme. At this congress, Fauziia Bairamova became *Ittifak*'s chairperson. This programme insisted that Tatar be made the Republic's sole state language and that Russians be denied citizenship, and it articulated Tatar territorial claims on Bashkiriia and Perm and Ul'ianovsk oblasts. The programme defined 'Tatarstan' as a neutral and independent state, which would have a standing army to be created from *Azatlyk* members. Moreover, the immigration of the Tatar Diaspora to Tatarstan was strongly advised to change the delicate ethno-demographic balance in favour of Tatars.³⁷ *Ittifak* claimed that cultural minority rights rather than full citizenship should be granted to the Russian inhabitants of Tatarstan. It called for the adoption of a common alphabet for all Turkic peoples and strong popular support for Islam. *Ittifak* also demanded an end to mixed marriages.³⁸

The leader of *Ittifak*, Fauziia Bairamova, was born on 5 December 1950 in the village of Sabai in Tatarstan. She graduated from Kazan University's Department of Philology in 1989. Her hunger strike from 13-27 May 1991 in Kazan was the first major victory of the Tatar national movement as it succeeded in preventing the holding of Russian Presidential elections on the territory of Tatarstan.³⁹ At that time, Bairamova's followers seemed to be ready for an armed struggle against Moscow if Russia rejected their demands for independence. Bairamova's version of Tatar nationalism was not confined to the borders of Tatarstan. It also called for the annexation of the Russian territories that are populated by the Tatar diaspora to Tatarstan:

Half of Russia's territory is Tatar lands.... The time has come to raise the question of annexing to Tatarstan the lands that belonged to the Tatars of old lands where they now dwell - the lands of Simbirsk, Saratov, Samara, Astrakhan, and Orenburg, the expanses of the Ufa plateau and all of the Urals'

³⁶ Rafael Kh. Mukhametdinov and Fauziia A. Bairamova, 'Chto takoe Ittifak?', *Komsomolets Tatarii*, 13 May 1990.

³⁷ 'Programma Tatarskoi Partii Natsional'noi Nezavisimosti (TPNN) Ittifak', *Panorama*, vol.2, no.6, 1991, pp.15-25.

³⁸ F. Abdullin, *Azatlyk Sakhifelere (1988-1996 ellar) Dokumental' povest'*, Chally: Islam Nury, 1997.

³⁹ For the biography of Fauziia A. Bairamova, see Nail M. Mukhariamov, 'Politicheskaia elita Tatarstana: Biograficheskie svedeniia', in *Regiony Rossii: Khronika i rukovaditeli. Tom.7*, ed. Kimitaka Matsuzato, Sapporo, Japan: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, 2000, pp.145-146.

western slope. The Siberian Tatars and the Sergach Mishars are a special question; their lands are also Tatar lands.⁴⁰

In opposition to these ethnic nationalist organisations, some 200 delegates came to Kazan from Moscow, Kiev, Astrakhan, Orenburg and Ul'ianovsk, and founded the Bulgar National Congress under the leadership of Gusman Khalilov in 1990. The Congress advocated that the Volga Tatars should be called 'Bulgars', and Tatarstan should be part of the Russian Federation.⁴¹

The Weakness of Ethnic Nationalist Movements in Post-Soviet Tatarstan

The success of the Shaimiev regime in maintaining the control of Tatarstan in the post-Soviet era through its *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* without relying on the support of any specific nationalist movement weakened ethnic nationalist movements in the Republic. It is possible to identify this trend in the Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalist organisations.

There has been a sharp decline in the popularity of Tatar ethnic nationalist movements in the post-Soviet period. The internal divisions within the Tatar ethnic nationalist movement played an important role in their weakness in the post-Soviet era. Ittifak and VTOTs (As noted in Chapter Three, Tatar Public Centre [TOTs] was renamed as All-Tatar Public Centre [VTOTs] in 1992) represented the main rival groups in the Tatar ethnic nationalist movement. Their struggle for the leadership of Tatar nationalism diluted the movement, while creating further internal divisions within their own organisations.⁴²

This could be seen clearly in the internal divisions of VTOTs, which has been a key player in the nationalist agitation of the Tatars in the early 1990s. The divide between the radical and moderate elements of VTOTs became very visible after the disintegration of

⁴⁰ *Kazanskie vedomosti*, 25 November 1991.

⁴¹ Damir M. Iskhakov, 'Neformal'nye ob"edineniia v sovremennom Tatarskom obshchestve', in *Sovremennye natsional'nye protsessy v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Damir M. Iskhakov and Rozalina N. Musina, Kazan: IlaLII KNTs RAN, 1992, pp.27–28.

the Soviet Union in 1991. The VTOTs branches in Nizhnekamsk, Al'metievsk and Elabuga were polarised into two competing groups of the centrists and the hard-liners. The centrists, headed by Fandas Safiullin, turned to sanctioned opposition to the regime, which gave them a licence to criticise the government for insufficient nationalism. The pro-Shaimiev elements in VTOTs sought to promote a moderate version of Tatar ethnic nationalism. Whilst often still sharply critical of the official policy, some VTOTs members no longer see the organisation as being in direct opposition to Tatarstan's authorities. As Nazip Galeev, chief editor of *Izvestiia VTOTs*, explains:

I would speak about alternative organisations. I do not like the word 'opposition' because we are a national movement. To be reasonable, we cannot say that we are an opposition. I would not take such a position because we should work together with the state authorities. The national movement aims to revive the Tatar state by civilised means, not through armed struggle but on the basis of International law.⁴³

Some members of VTOTs, particularly those based in the city of Naberezhnye Chelny, are more radical than those members in Kazan. For example, Zinnur Agliullin, Head of the Naberezhnye Chelny Branch of VTOTs, has been advocating radical ethnic nationalism since his election to his post in 1993. Reshat Safin, one of the leading figures of the radical wing of VTOTs, emphasised that the 'Russian idea' and the 'Tatar idea' are two irreconcilable concepts as the former is rooted in an ideology of colonialism and the latter was nurtured by anti-colonialism.⁴⁴ His analysis underscored the need for independent statehood and democratic institutions given the resilience of the Russian imperial mentality. There is a need for the state to protect the nation. The Tatar Diaspora should be supported to make Tatarstan a model of justice and economic prosperity and the fatherland (*vatan*) of all Tatars. All the Tatar Diaspora could defend it as a cradle of support for themselves, as this would make it possible for all Tatarstani citizens to embrace it as their motherland, take pride in their citizenship and defend the country's sovereignty and peace.⁴⁵

⁴² Damir M. Iskhakov, 'Natsional'nye dvizheniia Tatarstana: Bor'ba za liderstvo', *Sovetskaia Tataria*, 4 August 1992.

⁴³ As cited in Howard Davis, Philip Hammond and Lilia Nizamova, 'Media, Language Policy and Cultural Change in Tatarstan: Historic vs. Pragmatic Claims to Nationhood', (hereafter, 'Media, Language Policy and Cultural Change in Tatarstan'), *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.6, no.2, 2000, p.216.

⁴⁴ Reshat Safin, a retired Lieutenant-Colonel, is also known as 'Tatar Dudaev' since he attempted to create the 'National Guard' of Tatarstan as the military arm of the Tatar nationalist movement in 1992.

⁴⁵ Rashid Safin, 'Tatar ideiasi', *Tatarstan*, no.6, 1996, p.13.

Internal divisions also took place in Ittifak, the most radical Tatar ethnic nationalist party. During its Congress in December 1997, almost half of its members deserted the party leader Fauziia Bairamova. Meanwhile, Bairamova and Aidar Khalim (the pen name of Boris Khalimov), editor of the pro-Tatar nationalist literary magazine *Argamak*, differed over the Party programme.⁴⁶ Consequently, the more radical wing of Ittifak led by Bairamova dominated the Party. For example, Ittifak's main document, *Kanunname* (the Tatar codex), which was approved on 28 January 1996, radicalised the position of the Tatar ethnic nationalists by advocating the unity of the Tatars and the Bashkirs:

The first condition of achieving national freedom is to achieve the unity of the Turkic peoples of the North rather than striving for ethnic hegemony. This group include the Bashkirs and the Tatars.⁴⁷

Ittifak in its 1997 Congress proclaimed itself the only defender of national independence. The party sees the terms of Tatarstan's relationship with Moscow as being highly disadvantageous, denouncing the Republic's government as a 'dictatorship'. During the Congress, the party's leader, Fauziia Bairamova criticised the Republican authorities for their decision to adopt the Latin alphabet, and demanded a greater role for Islam:

If Tatars connect their future with Islam, with life according to the Koran, then their alphabet should be the same as it was for a thousand years, namely Arabic graphics.⁴⁸

During my interview with Rafael Mukhammetdinov, the founder of Ittifak, he systematised the ideology of Tatar ethnic nationalism as follows:

The national ideology of the Tatars should involve forming a Tatar state for ethnic Tatars. This ideology can be formulated as an eclectic combination of Tatarism, Islamism, and modernism (*Tatarcylyk*, *Islamcylyk*, and *Chagdashcylyk*).⁴⁹

The hard-liners, though they continue to pursue their radical agenda, have been effectively marginalized. For example, Fauziia Bairamova joined forces with the very

⁴⁶ Aidar Khalim, *Ubit' imperiiu*, Naberezhnye Chelny: Kalkan, 1997.

⁴⁷ *Tatar Kanunu - Kanunnama*, Kazan: Tatar Khalkynyn Milli Medzhlisi, 1996, p.16.

⁴⁸ Fauziia A. Bairamova, 'Islam i tatarskaia natsiia', *Madani Zhomga*, 19 December 1997.

⁴⁹ My interview with Rafael F. Mukhammetdinov, the founder of the Tatar National Independence Party – *Ittifak*, Kazan, 1 June 1998.

Communists who advocated the restoration of the USSR within a movement called *Omet* (Hope) under the leadership of the ex-Mufti of Tatarstan Gabdulla Galiulla in December 1998.

The divides within the Tatar ethnic nationalist organisations have been partly related to the pressures of the Republican authorities over the radical elements of the Tatar ethnic nationalist organisations. After strengthening its political and economic domination in Tatarstan with the active support of the Tatar ethnic nationalists, the Republican leadership has turned against the Tatar national movement who viewed the Power-Sharing Treaty of 1994 as a betrayal of the national interests of the Tatar people. In 1994, the Republican authorities asked *Ittifak*, *Milli Mejlis* and VTOTs to leave their comfortable premises in Kazan's city centre. At the same time, legal proceedings were initiated against some radical members of *Ittifak* and *Milli Mejlis*. During the 1995 elections to Tatarstan's parliament, the State Council, the Republican authorities succeeded in removing Fauziia Bairamova, the leader of *Ittifak*, from the parliament by supporting the moderate nationalist Talgat Abdullin, who was the President of Ak Bars Bank. Not surprisingly, Abdullin won the elections.

During my interview with Akhdas Burganov in 1998, he clarified the lack of unity among the Tatar intelligentsia and Tatarstan's leadership as follows:

Today, Tatar nationalism is a form of intelligentsia rather than nomenklatura nationalism. The support of Tatarstan's leadership is necessary for the success of the national movement since they could play a moral leadership to resist Russian chauvinists.⁵⁰

The Republican authorities also sought to co-opt the moderate elements of the Tatar ethnic nationalist organisations into the political establishment. For instance, Rafael Khakimov, one of the former leaders of VTOTs, was appointed as the Chief Advisor of Tatarstan's President Mintimer Shaimiev and the Director of the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan. Another VTOTs activist Fandas Safiullin was 'elected' to Tatarstan's Parliament with the open support of the Shaimiev leadership. Tatarstan's leadership has also elicited the support of some ordinary Tatar

⁵⁰ My interview with Prof. Akhdas Kh. Burganov, the Department of History at the Russian State Humanities University, Moscow, 28 July 1998.

nationalists due to its policies in such areas as language, education, culture and religion (these policies are discussed in Chapter Two). Besides, the Shaimiev government sponsored the formation of the All-Tatar World Congress, headed by Indus Tagirov, to co-ordinate Tatar activities all over the world, such as the creation of Tatar national schools and the organisation of national festivals in the areas where Tatars live.⁵¹

Similar to the trends among the Tatars, the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan have been unable to form a united front against Tatarstan's leadership and the Tatar ethnic nationalists in Tatarstan. Likewise, their moderate groups have also been co-opted by Tatarstan's leadership. Leokadia Drobizheva's warning that post-Soviet Russia could take advantage of the nationalist feelings of the Russians within the republics has not been borne out so far in Tatarstan.⁵²

In fact, the Russian ethnic nationalists in Tatarstan have been divided within themselves. These divisions, to a large extent, have been caused by the differences in the way that the Russian views towards the sovereignty of Tatarstan have ranged from active hostility to passive resistance and loyalty. Instead of trying to slow down or to discourage attempts to distance themselves from the Russian 'motherland', it appears that the majority of Russians tend to support the process of sovereignitisation. In fact, under El'tsin's Presidency between 1992 and 1999, the decisions made by Tatarstan's authorities were more important to the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan than the decrees emanating from Moscow.⁵³ Rafael Khakimov attempts to explain the lack of Moscow's support for the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan in terms of Moscow's colonial mentality. Khakimov says that:

Neither in its foreign, nor in its domestic policy does Russia act as a guarantor of the rights of the Russians and this is why the Russian people will have to look for support wherever they are, in the republics.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Rustam Gibadullin, *Tatarskoe natsional'noe dvizhenie: Politicheskaya deiatel'nost' i vliianie v Tatarstane (1988-1992)*, Kazan: KGU, 1998, pp.88-115.

⁵² Leokadia M. Drobizheva, 'Russian Ethnonationalism', in *Ethnic Conflict in the Post-Soviet World*, eds. Leokadia M. Drobizheva, et al., Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996, p.145.

⁵³ However, since Vladimir Putin's rise to Russian Presidency in 2000, the situation has changed significantly to the advantage of Moscow. This will be discussed in Chapter Five.

⁵⁴ Rafael S. Khakimov, *Sumerki imperii. K voprosu o natsii i gosudarstve*, (hereafter, *Sumerki imperii*), Kazan, Tatknizdat, 1993, p.18.

Nevertheless, it is very difficult to confirm that many ethnic Russians share this view. It is more likely that the lack of Moscow's support for the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan stems from its post-Soviet weakness. Trapped without any support from Moscow, the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan continued to promote the values of internationalism, as was the case during the Soviet period, and avoided radicalism in order to protect themselves from the negative effects of the potentially aggressive Tatar ethnic nationalism. In the end, however, the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan rely on the goodwill of Tatarstan's authorities rather than on the Tatars or on Moscow.

Comparisons with the Nationalist Movements in the Former Soviet Republics

The rise and fall of Tatar nationalism and the position of the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan could be compared to the successes and failures of other nationalist movements, and to the positions of the Russian Diaspora in the former Soviet republics.

The Tatar nationalist movement developed along a very different path than that taken by the nationalist movements in the former Soviet republics, except Belarus, the Russian Federation and the Central Asian republics. These union republics, which include Ukraine, Moldova and the republics in the Baltics and Transcaucasus gained their independence as a consequence of the existence of a number of factors such as a popular movement, a split within the republican elite and international support. However, no such coincidental combination of factors was available for the Tatar ethnic nationalist movement. These nationalist movements, unlike Tatar nationalist movements, advocated both national and democratic goals and were united in their opposition to the Soviet central government led by Gorbachev at the time. In Tatarstan, the Communists and the nationalists were united since they saw a common enemy in El'tsin rather than in Gorbachev. Furthermore, there was no direct international interest in the independence of Tatarstan. Consequently, the nationalist movement waned.⁵⁵

Similar to the fate of the Tatar nationalists, the nationalist movements in Belarus, the Russian Federation and the Central Asian republics have been extremely weak. In fact,

Belarus and the Central Asian republics gained independence by default as the USSR fell apart. The Belorussian nationalists, for instance, ultimately failed in their efforts to mobilise the Belorussian population. When the Belorussian population was finally mobilised in large numbers in spring 1991, it was primarily in terms of an independent trade union movement expressing outrage over price increases rather than around nationalist demands. Similar trends were also observable in other nationalist movements in the Russian Federation and Central Asia. There has not been a strong Russian or non-Russian nationalist mobilisation in the Russian Federation, except the Chechen nationalist movement. Nationalist mobilisation was remarkably weak in the countries of Central Asia, except in Uzbekistan where the nationalist movements of *Birlik* and *Erk* were noteworthy, but ultimately proved ineffective in taking control of the republic.⁵⁶

The passivity of the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan could be compared to the similar attitudes of the Russian Diaspora in the post-Soviet states. Ethnic Russians living in the Baltic States are largely abandoned by Russia, with Moscow's attempts to draw attention to their plight lacking any real assistance. Mostly economic colonialists sent by Moscow in the post-Second World War era to Russify the Baltics, ethnic Russians found themselves as foreigners living in foreign lands expected to learn the local languages after the disintegration of the USSR in 1991. The strict language requirements have left some 150,000 people in Estonia and 300,000 in Latvia without citizenship. In Lithuania, all permanent residents received full political rights, since the Lithuanians, comprising almost four-fifths of Lithuania's population, see no threat to their ethnic distinctiveness. Moreover, Lithuania adopted its citizenship law in November 1989, before its declaration of independence from the Soviet Union.⁵⁷

In Ukraine, the government did not take such harsh measures against its Russian minorities. Ukraine pursues an inclusive, if not civic (since Ukraine has many shortcomings in instituting a working democratic system), nation-building policy towards the Russians in Ukraine. Ukraine's total population of 52 million includes the Russian

⁵⁵ Mary McAuley, *Russia's Politics of Uncertainty*, (hereafter, *Russia's Politics of Uncertainty*), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p.54.

⁵⁶ Martha Brill Olcott, 'The New Nations of Central Asia', in *The Successor States to the USSR*, ed. John W. Blaney, Washington: Congressional Quarterly, 1995, pp.215-216.

⁵⁷ Neil J. Melvin, *Russians Beyond Russia: The Politics of National Identity*. London: Pinter/RIIA, 1995, pp.125-129.

Diaspora of 11,355,000 ethnic Russians and 16,898,000 Russian-speaking Ukrainians.⁵⁸ The Ukrainian politics of nation-building seeks to achieve a rapprochement between the Ukrainians and the local Russian speakers. Western Ukraine, which was incorporated into the Ukrainian SSR during World War II, became a hotbed of Ukrainian nationalism. Although the Ukrainian proclamation of sovereignty in 1990 spoke not in the name of the Ukrainian ethnos but rather on behalf of all 'the people of Ukraine', the 1992 law on national minorities, which was adopted by President Leonid Kravchuk, distinguishes between ethnic Ukrainians and 'minorities'. Besides, Ukrainian became the sole state language. Kravchuk's successor, Leonid Kuchma, has further reinforced the 'inclusive' nation-building policy since being elected in the summer of 1994.⁵⁹ However, it should be noted that although the closeness of Russians and Ukrainians works against the scenario of ethnic polarisation and political extremism in Ukraine, it is likely to serve as a basis for a potential re-union of Russia and Ukraine rather than for a 'civic' Ukrainian national identity.

Unlike Ukraine, Moldova pursued exclusive policies towards the Russians in this republic in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse in 1991. In reaction to this Moldavian nationalism, Transdniestria, the Slav-dominated enclave on the east bank of the Dniester River, waged a successful war of secession against Moldova in 1992 with crucial help from the Russian troops stationed in the area. In order to accommodate the Russians in Transdniestria, Moldova had to adopt a more inclusive perspective towards Transdniestria, and to shelve the idea of uniting with Romania. Apart from adopting conciliatory overtures to woo back Transdniestria, Moldova also granted territorial autonomy to the Turkic-speaking Gagauz in the south.⁶⁰ These policies have served to accommodate the Russians in Moldova.

Unlike the Russian Diaspora in these states, the ethnic Russians in Central Asia and the Caucasus chose to immigrate to the Russian Federation not because of hostile state policies but rather because of the deteriorating ethnic and socio-economic situation in

⁵⁸ Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge, 1996, p.345.

⁵⁹ Anatol Lieven, *Ukraine & Russia: A Fraternal Rivalry*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1999.

⁶⁰ Anatol Lieven, 'Non-Russian Perceptions of Russia', in *Rethinking Russia*, eds. Madhavan K. Palat and Geeti Sen, New Delhi: India International Centre, 1994, p.243.

these regions. In total, one third of the ethnic Russians in these regions immigrated to the Russian Federation.⁶¹

This comparative analysis shows that although the Russian diaspora has not been treated very well by many of the newly emerging states in the post-Soviet space, this has not led to any strong Russian nationalist mobilisation for the purpose of protecting the Russian diaspora, except in Moldova. Anatol Lieven points out the absence of a strong Russian ethnic identity and the lack of institutions capable of providing the basis for mass mobilisation as factors explaining the weakness of Russian nationalism.⁶² Anatol Lieven explained the weakness of Russian national identity among the Russian diaspora as follows:

‘Russian diaspora’ is not really ethnic Russian at all, but rather an ethnically mixed Russian speaking Soviet population of relatively recent migrants who have not yet had time to develop a real sense of rootedness, community, or local identity.⁶³

However, despite the current weakness of Russian national identity, there is still a danger that as Russia loses its role and its self-perception as the leader of other nations, it could develop a reactionary form of patriotism among the Russian diaspora. This form of Russian national identity is likely to be very resentful, closed and ethnically-based.⁶⁴

The Weakness of the Support for Ethnic Nationalism in Opinion Polls and Its Causes

Popular support for nationalism is very crucial in the success of nationalist mobilisation. Anatol Lieven elucidated this point as follows:

From a practical, non-academic point of view, therefore, it is of secondary importance where nationalist ideas and national passions come from, how

⁶¹ Neil J. Melvin, ‘The Russians: Diaspora and the End of Empire’, in *Nations Abroad: Diaspora Politics and International Relations in the Former Soviet Union*, eds. Charles King and Neil J. Melvin, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999, pp.39-41.

⁶² Anatol Lieven, ‘The Weakness of Russian Nationalism’, *Survival*, vol.41, no.2, 1999, pp.55-60.

⁶³ Lieven, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?’, p.20.

⁶⁴ Astrid S. Tuminez, *Russian Nationalism since 1856: Ideology and the Making of Foreign Policy*, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000, pp.341-342.

genuine or artificial they may be, or how recently they were generated. The test is: Do they work? Do they succeed in mobilizing and holding together the community to which they appeal? In the past, and in all too many parts of the world today, there is an even simpler test: Do they make people willing to fight and die?⁶⁵

Samuel Huntington argues that ethnic mobilisation will be strong when two ethnic groups belonging to different civilisations share the same territory.⁶⁶ However, Tatarstan with its four million inhabitants composed mainly of Russians and Tatars proved that it was not a fertile ground for a 'clash of civilisations'. In fact, the opinion poll results presented below show that the members of the Tatar and Russian ethnic groups could have multiple identities and preferences that are flexible, changeable and adaptive to a variety of circumstances.

In 1993, the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences conducted sociological surveys in all the republics of the Russian Federation, including Tatarstan, in order to determine the level of support for civic and ethnic identities among the Russians and non-Russians. This survey found that there is low support for ethnic nationalism. In this survey, 52 percent of the Tatars professed only a Tatarstani identity, 34 percent claimed to have both Tatarstani and Russia identities, and 3 percent had only Russian identity with a further 11 percent who declined to answer. In contrast, 15 percent of the Russians claimed only a Tatarstani identity, 49 percent had both Tatarstani and Russian identities, and 28 percent only felt Russian with a further 8 percent who preferred not to answer this question (See Table A4.9). In terms of the perceptions of 'motherland' in Tatarstan in 1993, in response to the question 'of what state do you consider yourself to be a citizen?' (the USSR, Russia, ethnic republic of residence within the Russian Federation), the majority of the Tatars (74 percent) considered themselves first of all to be citizens of the republic of residence, 18 percent as the citizen of the Soviet Union, 4 percent as a citizen of Russia, with 4 percent giving no answer. Among the Russians, the answers were equally divided: 29 percent as a citizen of the Soviet Union, 31 percent as a citizen of Russia, 36 percent as a citizen of Tatarstan, while 4 percent gave no answer (See Table A4.11). In terms of Soviet identity, 30 percent of the Tatars viewed the break up of the USSR positively while 48 percent had negative

⁶⁵ Anatol Lieven, 'Qu'est-ce qu'une nation? Scholarly Debate and the Realities of Eastern Europe', *National Interest*, Fall 1997, p.16.

⁶⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs*, vol.72, no.3, 1993, p.25.

views with 22 percent providing no answer. In contrast, 17 percent of the Russians viewed the break up of the USSR positively while 68 percent had negative views with 15 percent giving no answer (See Table A4.10).

According to an opinion poll taken in 1994 by Leokadia Drobizheva among the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan, the ethnic Russians and the Tatars assess interethnic relations in the republic differently. As compared to 18.6 percent of the Russians, 21.5 percent of the Tatars responded positively to the question of 'Have you experienced a violation of your rights because of your nationality?' Given the fact that 9.7 percent of the Tatars as compared to 4.2 percent of the Russians declined to answer this question, it is difficult to reach an accurate conclusion about the nature of ethnic discrimination in the Republic on the basis these figures. However, one could conclude that the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan are more internationalist in their orientation towards other nations as compared to the Tatars in the Republic. For example, to the question of 'Are you willing to accept a person of another nationality as a citizen of your republic', 83.7 percent of the Russians responded positively while 77 percent of Tatars answered similarly. While 47.7 percent of the Russians stated that they were open to the idea of interethnic marriage, only 25.7 percent of the Tatars shared the same view. Although the ethnic Russians are largely positive in their orientation towards other ethnic groups at the personal level, they are not equally positive about the nature of interethnic relations at the group level. While 80.5 percent of the Tatars responded positively to the question of 'How do you estimate inter-ethnic relations in your republic?', only 73 percent of the Russians were positive in their answers. Similarly, as compared to 7.6 percent of the Tatar respondents, 15.1 percent of the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan stated that interethnic relations were tense (See Table A4.12).⁶⁷

Although Tatarstan's policies of nation-building are presented by the Republican leadership as 'civic', especially the ethnic Russians of working age in Tatarstan tend to perceive these policies as being discriminatory. According to the opinion poll conducted by Donna Bahry among the working age population in Tatarstan, North Ossetiia and Sakha in 1997-1998, a majority of the Russians expressed that other nationalities (Tatars) are favoured for good jobs (63.9 percent) and for government posts (72.3

⁶⁷ Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict*, pp.112-113.

percent) (See Table A4.8). This perception is confirmed by the responses of the Tatars in Tatarstan. In the same opinion poll, a minority of Tatars replied that non-Tatars are favoured for good jobs (2.0 percent) and for government posts (4.1 percent).⁶⁸ Although some Russians may argue that the post-Soviet process of Tatarisation aims to discriminate against the Russians in the Republic because of their nationality, this opinion poll does not support such claims. According to Bahry's opinion poll, few ethnic Russians expressed that they experienced ethnic discrimination (9.5 percent) or hostile treatment due to their nationality (16.6 percent).⁶⁹ This shows that although the post-Soviet process of Tatarisation in Tatarstan has been resented by some ethnic Russians for economic reasons, it is not widely seen by the population in the Republic as an ethnic nationalist policy of the Republican leadership against the local ethnic Russians.

Although some of the ethnic Russians of working age in Tatarstan have been very resentful about the increasingly limited job opportunities for themselves in the Republic, they do not want to emigrate from Tatarstan. For example, a poll taken among the Russians in Tatarstan in the summer of 1992 showed that the desire of ethnic Russians to emigrate from Tatarstan was quite low at only 6 percent compared to, for example, 37 percent that wished to leave Chechnia.⁷⁰ According to the results of a poll conducted in Tatarstan in 1995, only two percent of ethnic Russians expressed the desire to leave the Republic.⁷¹ According to Dmitry Gorenburg, this could be explained by the fact that the majority of Tatarstan's residents are against Tatar ethnic nationalism. In his opinion poll among Tatarstan's residents, 59 percent of the respondents replied negatively to the question of 'Should Titular Language be Sole Official Language', while the positive responses formed the 29 percent of the answers.⁷² It should be stated, however, that the results of opinion polls in Russia are not entirely reliable, since different polls seem to prove contradictory points.

⁶⁸ Donna Bahry, 'Ethnicity and Equality in Post-communist Economic Transition: Evidence from Russia's Republics', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.54, no.5, 2002, p. 690.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 31 July 1992.

⁷¹ Rozalina N. Musina and Rafael Tagirov, 'Etnicheskoe samosoznanie cherez prizmu sotsiologii', *Nauchnyi Tatarstan*, no.4, 1995, p.59.

⁷² Dmitry Gorenburg, 'Nationalism for the Masses: Popular Support for Nationalism in Russia's Ethnic Republics', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.53, no.1, 2001, p.80.

The support for nationalist mobilisation is also weak among the Russians, who were surprised in the post-Soviet era by the sudden decline in their privileged positions, which they used to take for granted in the Soviet period. In reality, however, the Russians had no privileges but rather 'advantages' in the Soviet Union, since a Communist Russian who enjoyed 'advantages' owed them to his or her communism and not to his or her Russianness.⁷³ Despite this, ethnic Russians have largely expressed their regret over the break-up of the Soviet Union since 1992, since the transition process, which resulted in an increase in poverty, crime and a decline in health services and life expectancy, has been painful to large segments of the Russian population.⁷⁴ The post-Soviet crisis of Russian national identity is evident in the following response of Iurii Afanas'ev to a question concerning his own Russian identity:

This is difficult to say. I am Russian, certainly. I have been educated and brought up as a Russian. But I am more a Soviet, perhaps even a European, because it does not seem either necessary, useful, comfortable or even polite to be in the first place a Russian.⁷⁵

Because of the nostalgia towards the 'stable' years of the Soviet Union, the 'Soviet' consciousness is still alive among the Russians. It is striking that only 'national' responsibility has weakened considerably in the post-Soviet era. According to the findings of a survey conducted by Iurii Levada and Michel Vale on the change in the social consciousness of post-Soviet peoples, the Russians mentioned the family, job and citizenship more as objects of pride rather than the country in which they lived in.⁷⁶

The strength of the support for ethnic nationalist goals depends strongly on how connected its members feel to the rest of their ethnic group. The use of one's native language, the practice of traditional customs and the holding of strong religious beliefs determine the strength of an individual's sense of cultural identity. It can be said that there is a limited potential for the mobilisation of ethnic differences in Tatarstan given the absence of institutions that could channel ethnic differences into ethnic claims. In this

⁷³ John B. Dunlop, 'Russia: In Search of an Identity', in *New States, New Politics: Building the Post-Soviet Nations*, eds. Ian Bremmer and Roy Taras, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p.31.

⁷⁴ David D. Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998, pp.308-312.

⁷⁵ Cited in Roman Laba, 'How Yeltsin's Exploitation of Ethnic Nationalism Brought Down an Empire', *Transitions*, no.2, 12 January 1996, p.7.

⁷⁶ Iurii A. Levada, 'Chelovek sovetskii' piat' let spustia: 1989-1994', *Ekonomicheskie i sotsial'nye peremeny: monitoring obshchestvennogo mneniia*, no.1, 1995, pp.9-14.

sense, the factors impeding the growth of Tatar ethnic nationalism include the self/other perceptions of the Tatars and the Russians, the dominance of religious secularism, the widespread acceptance of bilingualism, mixed marriages and cosmopolitan urban culture. Moreover, the weaknesses of the market economy and civil society deprive the Tatar and the Russian ethnic nationalists of the instruments for mobilising the masses in Tatarstan.

The Tatar Perceptions of Themselves and the Russians in Tatarstan

Before analysing the Tatar and the Russian perceptions of themselves and each other, it should be stated here that these perceptions do not represent anything concrete. They are symbolic constructions made up of national myths. George Schöplin defines myth as 'a set of beliefs, usually put forward as a narrative, held by a community about itself'.⁷⁷ These myths include the myths about foundation, antiquity, territory, election, civilising mission, redemption and rebirth.

There are various competing Tatar perceptions of themselves and the Russians in Tatarstan. The majority of the Tatars, including some moderate Tatar nationalists, do not see themselves in direct opposition to the ethnic Russians in the Republic. The minority view which is shared only by some extreme Tatar nationalists is that the Tatars - patient, industrious, humiliated by Moscow, willing to live an independent life - were in direct opposition to Russia - thriving for suppression, plunder and colonisation. Even for these Tatar nationalists, the axis of opposition lies, to a large extent, not between the two nations - Tatar and Russian - but rather between Tatars and the power structures of Moscow.⁷⁸

Tatar ethnic nationalists see their conceptions of the Tatar nation's collective past and future as integral parts of their self-definition. In line with this position, many of Tatar historians tend to glorify the supremacy of the Tatars over Russians under the Golden Horde as the golden age of the Tatar nation.⁷⁹ In 1944, the Central Committee of the

⁷⁷ George Schöplin, *Nations, Identity, Power: The New Politics of Europe*, London: Hurst & Co., 2000, p.80.

⁷⁸ Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, 'History, Collective Memory and Identity: The Tatars of Sovereign Tatarstan', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol.32, no.4, 1999, p.384.

⁷⁹ Uli Schamiloglu, 'The Formation of a Tatar Historical Consciousness: Sihabaddin Mercani, and the Image of the Golden Horde', *Central Asian Survey*, vol.9, no.2, 1990, p.43.

CPSU condemned the idealisation of the Golden Horde by Tatar historians. Instead, the Soviets called for a 'scientific' investigation of Tatar history. The USSR Academy of Sciences in Moscow and its Branch in Kazan held a joint conference in Moscow in 25-26 April 1946. It was concluded that the identification with Mongol Tatars was an error. The Tatars were a mixture of Finno-Ugric peoples and Turkic-speaking Bulgars.⁸⁰ According to the Bulgar thesis of Alfred Khalikov, the genealogical origins of the Tatars go back to the Bulgar State.⁸¹ Many leaders of the TASSR shared this position. For example, Fikrat Tabaev, the First Secretary of the Tatar Obkom of the CPSU, complained that,

A big mistake was made in the 1920s. We should have named our new republic 'Bulgar' and its peoples 'Bulgars' to avoid unpleasant association with the epoch of Tatar Mongol rule of Russia.⁸²

However, these attempts at backdating Tatar national consciousness to the Bulgar period are not convincing since the collective consciousness of the people in the Middle Volga region at that time was tribal, dynastic and religious rather than ethnic.⁸³

Some of the Tatar nationalist intellectuals describe their nationalist activities as a form of self-defence against the ethnic discrimination to which they have been subjected for decades, during which they were forced to remain silent on the issue. According to them, the Tatars have been colonised by Moscow, and therefore have the moral right to be invested with national autonomy in Tatarstan. The idea of Tatarstan as the land of the Tatars is widespread among the Tatars in the Republic. In a textbook entitled *Tatarstan Tarikhynnan Khikeyaler* (Stories from the History of Tatarstan), recommended by the Ministry of Education for use in the fifth and sixth grades, Saliam Alishev argued that,

Tatarstan's land is the Tatar people's ancient homeland. Our people's history is very deep and ancient. On this land many other peoples have made the Republic of Tatarstan their second homeland from other places. During the centuries the Tatar people have worked together with Russians, Chuvash, Ukrainians, Bashkirs, Mari, Mordvins and Udmurts to make our homeland very beautiful.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Viktor A. Shnirelman, *Who Gets Past? Competition for Ancestors among Non-Russian Intellectuals in Russia*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press 1996, p.24.

⁸¹ Al'fred Kh. Khalikov, *Kto my – Bulgary ili Tatary*, Kazan: Izd-vo Kazan, 1992, pp.1-5.

⁸² As cited in Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict*, p.18.

⁸³ Edward J. Lazzerini, 'Ethnicity and the Uses of History: The Case of the Volga Tatars and Jadidism', *Central Asian Survey*, November 1982, pp.61-63.

⁸⁴ Saliam Alishev, *Tatarstan Tarikhynnan Khikeyaler*, Kazan: Magarif, 1993, p.3.

In this passage, Tatars are pictured as the indigenous population of the land. Meanwhile, the 'other peoples' in Tatarstan are described as mere 'settlers' on that land, contributing to the propagation of Tatarstan as the 'Tatar' homeland. To reinforce this understanding of national territory, Tatarstan's government has been organising celebrations for the Tatar cultural events, such as *Sabantui*.⁸⁵

However, the Tatars blame not only the Russians but also the Tatars for their subjugation by Moscow. For instance, Fauziia Bairamova wrote that,

The most appalling tragedy is that the nation is not ready for a sovereign state.
The Tatars have lost pride in their nation, and this is a real tragedy.⁸⁶

In the same manner, Tufan Mingnullin criticised the lack of unity among the Tatars and their docility and servility:

Today as well, Tatars are not united. This is why their opinion is not taken into account. I do not blame the Russians at all for what we are. Only we are to blame. Those who lack self-respect are not respected. A docile slave is beaten more often.⁸⁷

The problem of collaborators forms the cornerstone of the Tatar nationalist discourse. Ferit Yakhin's poem 'Ber Sharekh' is a very lucid example of this:

For so long, if asked 'where is your land?'
Through sighs, a Tatar would say: 'Russians took it!'
Why not say it as it was? 'I gave it to them!'
And generations to come would know who was who.⁸⁸

The problem of 'collaborators' is related to the assimilation of the Tatars into the Russian culture, which was elaborated in the legend of *Mankurtism* which comes from the Turkic words *man* (brain) and *kurt* (worm) meaning a person whose brain is eaten up by worms. According to this Turkic legend, inhumane treatment by the Russians has eliminated the idea of 'self' from the Tatar consciousness, thereby turning them into obedient slaves – *mankurt*. In the legend, the mother of a *mankurt* man tries to save him from this state of

⁸⁵ R. D. Sharafetdinov, *Sabantui-Khalyknyn yasheeshe*, Kazan: Gasyrlar Avazy, 1997.

⁸⁶ *Sovetskaia Tatariia*, 22 October 1991.

⁸⁷ Tufan Mingnullin, 'Iz dnevnikov. Kto kogo ne liubit? Eshche raz o tatarakh i tatarstve', *Tatarstan*, no.3, 1996, p.55.

⁸⁸ Farid Yakhin, 'Ber Sharekh', *Elluki*, 6 June 1997, p.7.

unconsciousness. However, the *mankurt* man kills his mother, as he perceives her as a threat to his survival. In the nationalist discourse of Tatars, the *mankurts*, the traitors of the Tatar nation, are seen as victims of Russification and a threat to Tatarisation. Fauziia Bairamova bestows the Tatar mother with a political responsibility in eliminating the influence of *mankurtism* among the Russified Tatars:

If a mother is a *mankurt*, the nation disappears. To give the nation a future, the mother has to become a nationalist, a foster-mother of the nation [*milletperver*]. She must become clever, competent and religiously and politically mature.⁸⁹

Indeed, the Russian culture is highly respected by most Tatars. Even Robert Batulla, a nationalist author, stresses his affinity for Russian as well as Tatar culture:

My teachers were Sergei Obrastsov, Professors Gladkov and Smirnov in Moscow, Viktor Rozov in drama. I am grateful to them. I am grateful to Karamzin, Chernyshevskii, Tolstoi, Sakharov, Khudiakov, Gumilev.⁹⁰

David C. Lewis explains this affinity between the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan by a Russian proverb, which says that ‘scratch a Russian and underneath you’ll find a Tatar.’⁹¹

The Russians in Tatarstan have generally been seen by the Tatars in the Republic as people sharing the common destiny of the Tatars. Rafael Khakimov’s following statement demonstrates how some Tatars perceive the tension between the Russian State and the Russian people:

The Russian nation has become split into two ‘nations’ – that of capital-based officialdom, which seeks to retain the function of the centre of an empire, without which Moscow would even be unable to feed itself in the coming years, and the provincial, colonial nation living in another world and having different interests, often firmly linked with ‘nationality’ territories by kinship and economic ties.⁹²

⁸⁹ As cited in Kondrashov, *Nationalism and the Drive for Sovereignty in Tatarstan*, p.84.

⁹⁰ As cited in Davis, Hammond and Nizamova, ‘Media, Language Policy and Cultural Change in Tatarstan’, p.218.

⁹¹ David C. Lewis, ‘Ethnicity and Religion in Tatarstan and the Middle Volga Region’, *Central Asian Survey*, vol.16, no.2, 1997, p.217.

⁹² Khakimov, *Sumerki imperii*, p.66.

The popularity of such views among some Russians and Tatars, which I personally noticed during my fieldworks in Tatarstan both in 1996 and 1998, shows that the Tatar perceptions of themselves and the Russians in Tatarstan cannot be explained in terms of a simple binary opposition of the self and the other. Those who see themselves, and are seen by others, as being members of the Tatar nation share certain things with some Russians. To what extent this analysis is valid for the Russians in Tatarstan could be established by looking at their perceptions of themselves and the Tatars in Tatarstan

The Russian Perceptions of Themselves and the Tatars in Tatarstan

The self-perception of the Russians in Tatarstan and their attitudes towards the Tatars are also not entirely conducive to manipulation by Russian or Tatar ethnic nationalists either. The Russians view themselves as being culturally advanced, non-ethnic-nationalists who care for the Tatars who are in turn pictured as being culturally backward ethnic nationalists prone to Islamic fundamentalism.

Russian historians have generally had mixed views concerning the Mongol rule over the Russians. One strand of Russian history-writing seeks to account for Russia's 'backwardness' relative to the West in terms of the despotic influences of the 'Tatar yoke' on the Russian soul. Although the Russian Empire adopted some of the administrative and military techniques of the Tatars, Russian historians have generally blamed 'the Tatar yoke' for their separation from the cultural development of the Western Slavic nations. However, the evidence provided in Chapter 1 shows that the relations between the Muscovite and Tatar nobles were very close and pragmatic until Ivan IV's capture of the Kazan Khanate in 1552. On the other hand, another strand of Russian historians has generally evaluated the Russian rule over the Tatars positively. They argued that after becoming a part of the Russian Empire, the Tatars were saved from extermination by other nomadic tribes in the Eurasian landmass as they came under the influence of the progressive Russian culture.⁹³

⁹³ Charles J. Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde: The Mongol Impact on Medieval Russian History*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985, p.63.

Russians have a long history of living together with the Finno-Ugric and Turkic peoples of the Volga. In fact, Tatarstan can be claimed to be a historical centre of Russian culture as well as Tatar culture with some justification.⁹⁴ After all, in addition to being the capital of Tatarstan, Kazan is the city of a well-known Russian scientist Nikolai Lobachevskii and novelist Maksim Gorkii. It is also the city where both Vladimir Lenin and Lev Tolstoi went to university.⁹⁵

Russians' superior view of themselves prevents them from adopting an ethnic nationalist agenda, which is, in the Russian view, more suitable for the less modern Tatars. Some Russian ethnic nationalists assert that foreigners (non-Russians or non-Orthodox people) were to some extent to blame for the misfortunes that befell Russia, that non-Russians enjoyed too many rights in Russia or abused the opportunities offered them. This reflects a pathological response to the disintegration of the foundations of Soviet society as well as a pathological adaptation to new economic and geopolitical realities.

There are two irreconcilable views regarding the relations between Russians and Tatarstan's mainly-Tatar leadership. One view maintains that thanks to the multinational approach of Shaimiev towards the nationalities issue, Russian language and culture is still very dominant in the Republic whereas another view contends that there is virtually no cultural provision for the Russian-speaking citizens of Tatarstan. The second view is shared by those Russians who resent the underdevelopment of the Russian culture in Tatarstan. In May 1998, I personally witnessed a Russian cultural festival where some participants complained about the decline in Russian culture in the Republic. For this, they blamed the Republican authorities that mainly support the Tatar culture.

In the post-Soviet period, the ethnic Russians have felt threatened by the prioritisation of the Tatar culture and the more forthright expressions of Tatar nationalism in Tatarstan. A significant number of ethnic Russians and some Russian-speaking Tatars are worried that a process of 'Tatarisation' is increasingly marginalizing them. They would prefer to live not in the independent nation-state of Tatarstan but in 'Tatariia', a province of Russia.

⁹⁴ Evgenii Busygin, 'Russkie v mnogonatsional'nom povolzh'e', in *Iazyk i natsionalizm v postsovetskikh respublikakh*, ed. Mikhail N. Guboglo, Moscow: IEA RAN, 1994, pp.45-48.

⁹⁵ Marat R. Mustafin and Rashid G. Khuzeev, *Vse o Tatarstane: Ekonomiko-geograficheskii spravochnik*, (hereafter, *Vse o Tatarstane*), Kazan: Kazanskoe Knizhnoe Izd-vo, 1994, p.88.

Those people who regret the break-up of the USSR and people who feel closer to Russian culture support this view.⁹⁶ The vice-chairperson of the Society of Russian Culture, Iurii Scheglov, emphasises the importance of a specifically regional Russian culture: 'The part of Russian culture concentrated in the Republic has an independent significance; it should be preserved and should develop here'.⁹⁷ Similarly, Roman Beliakov argued that,

Slogans which were quite understandable in the period of the struggle for sovereignty so called romantic nationalist ones, could be harmful in a later period. Tatarstan's politics should not be run according to the publicist cliché that Russia is an empire of evil.⁹⁸

For Beliakov, the Russians in Tatarstan are not likely to develop active hostility or loyalty to Tatarstan's sovereignty. It is probable that they could demonstrate passive resistance to Republican sovereignty and to Tatar's position as a state language. Beliakov explains the passivity of the Russians to the outright expressions of Tatar nationalism as a product of the 'post-imperial' reorganisation of the Russian people. In his opinion, the disintegration of the USSR and the crisis of the post-Soviet Russia have caused confusion and uncertainty among Russians about their future.⁹⁹ Rozalina Musina supported Beliakov's argument as follows:

Despite the fact that some Russians continue to display an imperial mentality and exhibit an 'elder brother' demeanor, many Russians have demonstrated an understanding of Tatar concerns. According to a 1989 survey, 78 percent of urban Tatars and more than 40 percent of urban Russians prefer to have their children educated in schools providing instruction in both Russian and Tatar.¹⁰⁰

Vladimir Beliaev, the leader of the *Soglasie* (Accord) movement of the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan, views the emergence of Tatar ethnocracy as the main problem that aggravates the relations between the Russians and the Tatars in Tatarstan. In his interview with Leokadia Drobizheva, Beliaev stated that,

⁹⁶ Gulnara Khasanova, 'Russian Identity: The View from Tatarstan', *The Jamestown Foundation Prism*, 6 March 1998.

⁹⁷ As cited in Davis, Hammond and Nizamova, 'Media, Language Policy and Cultural Change in Tatarstan', p.221.

⁹⁸ Roman Beliakov, 'Russkii vopros' v natsional'noi politike Tatarstana', in *Mezhetnicheskie i mezkhkonfessional'nye otnosheniia v Respublike Tatarstana*, ed. Damir M. Iskhakov, Kazan: Apparat Prezidenta RT, 1993, p.51.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Rozalina N. Musina, 'Contemporary Ethnosocial and Ethnopolitical Processes in Tatarstan', in *Ethnic Conflict in the Post-Soviet World: Case Studies and Analysis*, eds. Leokadia M. Drobizheva et al., Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1996, p.202.

Today, 90-95 or 100 percent of Tatarstan's leadership is composed of the Tatars. Nevertheless, we do not demand the formation of a Russian nomenklatura. If the leaders are good people, this is completely fine for us. However, we are talking about the fact that appointments to the leadership positions in Tatarstan are not done in accordance with the merit system.¹⁰¹

Being aware of the political weakness of the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan in challenging Tatarstan's leadership, Beliaev calls for Moscow to scare the Republican leadership into bringing Republican law into conformity with the federal laws. In this way, he hopes that Tatarstan's residents regardless of their ethnic background could enjoy more democracy in the Republic.¹⁰²

The lack of strong interethnic polarization between the Russians and the Tatars in Tatarstan shows that both the Tatar and Russian perceptions of the self and the other do not form a suitable basis for nationalist mobilization. These perceptions result from the existence of religious tolerance, the high levels of bilingualism, interethnic marriages and urbanization in addition to the state-dependent nature of Tatarstan's economy and the underdevelopment of civil society. It is useful to explore these factors in detail in order to draw a realistic picture of the culture and society in the Republic.

Religious Tolerance

Among other factors, the high level of religious tolerance in Tatarstan undermines the basis for interethnic polarisation between the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan. In addition to the Soviet policies of secularisation, the Tatar and the Russian conceptions of religion contributed to the weakness of religious polarisation, which was desired by ethnic nationalists of both sides.

Islam was not a major component of Tatar national identity when Tatar ethnic nationalism started to take shape in the late 1980s, since the 70 years of Soviet rule secularised the society in the Republic. According to a survey carried out by Susan

¹⁰¹ Leokadia M. Drobizheva, 'Interv'iu s V. A. Beliaevom', in *Govorit elita respublik Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, ed. Leokadia M. Drobizheva, Moscow: REA RAN, 1996, p.26.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.27.

Goodrich Lehmann in 1993, active religiosity among the Tatars was primarily confined to old and rural women with low levels of education. In general, Muslims in Tatarstan are not practising Islam regularly. While 26 percent of the Tatars believe and practice Islam, 30 percent only believe whereas 15 percent are equivocal and a further 29 percent are tolerant atheists with another 1 percent ready to fight against religion. Concerning the religious orientation of the Russians, Goodrich-Lehmann found that while 9 percent of the Russians believe and practice Orthodox Christianity, 28 percent only believe whereas 19 percent are equivocal with 43 percent being tolerant atheists and another 1 percent ready to fight against religion (See Table A4.13).¹⁰³

It is the collapse of the communist ideology and the rise of nationalist movements that enabled Islam to play a bigger ideological role in Tatarstan. The first major public appearance of Islam came at the Russia-wide Congress of Islam in Tatarstan's capital Kazan on 24 May 1988. Moreover, Tatarstan hosted the celebration of the eleventh centennial of the adoption of Islam by the Volga Bulgars in August 1989. This became an occasion for the Tatar nationalists to speak of an Islamic revival. Moreover, a crescent was erected on the top of the tower of Suumbike on 10 August 1989. In this period, several mosques including the prestigious Azimov Mosque in Kazan were reopened. In the post-Soviet era, the radical nationalists shifted their emphasis from ethnic nationalism to religious nationalism to deepen the divide between the Tatars and the Russians. One particular newspaper, *Iman* (Belief), plays a significant role in the dissemination of this type of radical Islamist propaganda in Tatarstan. These Islam-based Tatar nationalists promote their activities also in Tatarstan's 630 mosques and 9 Islamic seminaries.¹⁰⁴

In reality, however, the fundamentalist position is popular neither among Tatarstan's leadership nor among the ordinary Tatars, since religion needs to be secular in order to be able to unite all Tatars regardless of the nature of their religious belief. It could be argued that, for the majority of the Tatars, Islam has virtually become an ethno-religion. The leader of VTOTs, Safin argued that

¹⁰³ Susan Goodrich-Lehmann, 'Islam and Ethnicity in the Republics of Russia', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.13, no.1, 1997, p.83.

¹⁰⁴ Dmitry Tramifov, 'The Friday Mosques and Their Imams in the Former Soviet Union', *Religion, State & Society*, vol.24, nos.2/3, 1996, pp.214-217.

Our religion has to be a Tatar Islam; if Islam is to save us from Russification, a Tatarised Islam will safeguard us from assimilating into [other] Turkic and Muslim people. And this is Jadid Islam, and religious observance in Tatar',¹⁰⁵

The Tatar reform movement in Islam, which is known as *Jadidism*, could be seen as the Islamic analogue of the Reformation in Medieval Europe. Whilst maintaining a strong sense of Tatar identity, the *Jadidist* Islam focuses less on the past, more on the future; less on religion, more on language and culture.¹⁰⁶

Religious fanaticism is not popular among the Orthodox Christians in Tatarstan either. Orthodox Christianity is practiced by not only by the Russians in Tatarstan, but also by the Chuvash, Mari and Udmurt peoples living in the Republic as well as a small group of the Tatars. Archbishop Anastasy has been the representative of the Russian Orthodox Church in Tatarstan since 1993. Members of the Russian Orthodox Church complain about the lack of funds provided by the Republican authorities. When I visited Raifskii Bogoroditskii Monastery in 1998, one of the monks told me that Russian Orthodoxy was discriminated against by the Republican authorities, who publicly claim the equality of two confessions (Islam and Russian Orthodoxy), but in practice provide generous financial assistance only to the Islamic establishment.

In addition to the weakness of religiosity among the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan, which was discussed above, the loss of the monopoly of the Russian Orthodox Church over the Christian community in Tatarstan has been an important factor in the moderation of inter-confessional relations in Tatarstan. When the missionaries from the West started to disseminate information about non-Orthodox versions of Christianity after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the monopoly of the Russian Orthodox Church over the Christian community in Tatarstan was weakened. For example, a group of Argentinean priests came to Kazan in 1991 to establish a Roman Catholic community in Tatarstan. Apart from the Roman Catholics, the Russian Orthodox Old-Believers' Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Baptists have also been active in their competition with the Russian Orthodox Church. All of this missionary activity, combined with the disregard of Russians towards religion in general, suggests that Orthodox Christianity is not playing any significant role among Russians in antagonising them against the Tatars in Tatarstan.

¹⁰⁵ Safin, 'Tatar ideias', p.13.

¹⁰⁶ Damir M. Iskhakov, *Fenomen tatarskogo dzhadidizma*: Kazan: Iman, 1997, pp.5-8.

Apart from Islam and Christianity, there is an influential Jewish community in Tatarstan. I. Gorelic heads the Republican Jewish community, which is concentrated mainly in Kazan and Naberezhnye Chelny. The communities of these two cities are members of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia. Berl Lazar, the Chief Rabbi of Russia, has visited Tatarstan several times, and established good relations with the Shaimiev leadership. Based on these observations, it could be concluded that the peaceful coexistence of three religions in Tatarstan limits the capacity of ethnic nationalists to manipulate religious differences.

Bilingualism

Another social factor that limits the social support for ethnic nationalism is the widespread acceptance of bilingualism among the Tatars.¹⁰⁷ As Dmitry Gorenburg argues, ethnic nationalists view bilingualism as an obstacle to their movements. That is why the Tatar ethnic nationalists have been critical of the Russian-speaking Tatars who cannot speak Tatar. In general, the Russian-speaking Tatars have not been interested in belonging to the Tatar high culture, because they could neither partake of Tatar culture nor contribute to it. In the early 1990s, such notable writers as Dias Valeev and Akhat Mushinskii were criticised in the Tatar press for writing only in Russian.¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, in the post-Soviet period, the following poem of Abdullah Tukai, the national poet of the Tatars, calling the Tatar people to learn their native language has become very popular among the Tatar ethnic nationalists:

‘Tugan tel’

O you mother tongue, you fair tongue, father’s, mother’s tender word!
By your means I learned so many things and people in the world.
Times ago in that language mummy sung a lullaby,
My grandmother told her stories, as nightfall was passing by.
O my mother tongue, forever do I need succour of yours,
Since a child I came to know you’re my pride and my remorse.
O my tongue, in your fair glamour for the first time I besought:
‘Please, forgive me and my parents all our sins and errors, God!’¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Dmitry Gorenburg, ‘Not With One Voice: An Explanation of Intragroup Variation in Nationalist Sentiment’, *World Politics*, vol.53, no.4, 2000, p.135.

¹⁰⁸ Mirfatykh Z. Zakiev, *Tatary: problemy istorii i iazyka*, Kazan: IlaLI ANT, 1995, pp.144-145.

¹⁰⁹ Ravil Bukharaev’s translation. Ravil Bukharaev, *The Model of Tatarstan under President Mintimer Shaimiev*, London: Curzon, 1999, p.90.

Statistics on the language use of the Tatars show the level of the assimilation of the Tatars into the Russian culture. There has been a significant decrease in the number of the only Russian-speaking Tatars between 1979 and 1989. According to the 1979 census results, out of 6,317,000 Tatars, 13.2 percent declared Russian as their native language, while 68.9 percent declared themselves bilingual both in Russian and Tatar. Only, 17.9 percent of the Tatars were not assimilated into the Russian culture, as they did not speak Russian.¹¹⁰ According to the 1989 census results, only 3 percent of the Tatars were attitudinally integrated declaring Russian as their native language, while 81 percent of the Tatars were functionally integrated declaring themselves bilingual in Russian and Tatar. Although the Tatars in Tataria had a very high rate of native language retention (96.6 percent), the same rate among the Tatars outside the Republic was lower (83.2 percent). Although most of the Tatars could speak Russian, very few Russians in the Republic bothered to learn Tatar (1.1 percent in 1989).¹¹¹

However, it would be mistaken to interpret the widespread use of the Russian language as a symbol of the total Russification of Tatarstan. In reality, in Tatarstan, as elsewhere in the USSR, the Russian language worked as a *lingua franca* and a medium of Sovietisation rather than Russification. Moreover, Russians and Tatars have spoken Russian equally well. As a result, the Tatar language, which had been Sovietised rather than Russified under the Soviet rule, does not appear to be a divisive factor in mobilising the Tatar masses against the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan.

Interethnic Marriages

Interethnic marriages constitute another factor weakening the support for the Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms, since individuals in ethnically mixed families often experience difficulty in defining their own ethnic identity or that of their children. This

¹¹⁰ *Chislennost' i sostav naseleniia SSSR: Po dannym vsesoiuznoi perepisi naseleniia 1979 goda*, Moscow: Finansy i statistika, 1984, p.73.

¹¹¹ *Etnicheskii sostav naseleniia SSSR: Po dannym vsesoiuznoi perepisi naseleniia 1989 goda*, Moscow: Finansy i statistika, 1991.

may lead to 'cosmopolitanism', which by definition implies a weak identification with all ethnic groups.

Being aware of this, the Tatar ethnic nationalists perceived the high rate of intermarriage between Tatars and Russians (one-fourth of all marriages) as a threat to their national survival. Supporting this position, Aidar Khalim, editor of *Argamak*, in his article entitled as *Sovremennye smeshannye braki, ili kol'tso bezotvetstvennosti* (Contemporary Mixed Marriages, or a Ring of Irresponsibility) deplored the mixed marriages as 'destructive' to the Tatar national culture.

In old times, Tatars were constantly entering marriages with representatives of other ethnoses. Such marriages, being based, as a rule on real love, improved the gene fund and refreshed the blood of the nation. That kind of marriage differs from current interethnic marriages as day differs from night. In those times, they were like 'tein in tea', a microscopic ingredient in a body of ethnos not destroying its essence, and existed as an isolated phenomenon. What do we see now? Mixed families, encouraged by the state policy of nation-merging, serve now to deprive the people of their national features, to impose impersonality, and to cause genetic decline.¹¹²

In fact, interethnic marriages only serve to promote Tatars and Russians with multiple identities. This may not necessarily mean the one-sided Russification of the Tatars, since these marriages contribute to the Tatarisation of the Russians as well. In fact, such mixed families could help to promote both the Russian and the Tatar cultures equally.¹¹³

During my field study visit to Tatarstan in 1996, I was hosted by the ethnically mixed Ledoversii family, in which Viktor, the husband, is an ethnic Russian, Neliia, the wife, is an ethnic Tatar and their daughter Rada is a Russian speaking Tatar. There was tolerance and respect for both cultures in the family. Viktor was positive about the fact that Neliia maintained her links to the Tatar culture. They even registered Rada, their daughter as a Tatar, even if she developed no interest in Tatar culture and language. This shows that one's official ethnic identity may not be the one held by that person in informal contexts. Moreover, it is not surprising that all members of the family were united in their reaction to the Tatar and Russian versions of ethnic nationalism. Given the popularity of mixed

¹¹² Aidar Khalim, 'Sovremennye smeshannye braki, ili kol'tso bezotvetstvennosti', *Argamak*, no.2, 1993, pp.4-5.

¹¹³ Guzel Stoliarova, 'Mezhetnicheskie sem'i v Tatarstane', in *Iazyk i natsionalizm v postsovetskikh respublikakh*, ed. Mikhail N. Guboglo, Moscow: IEA RAN, 1994, p.180.

marriages in Tatarstan, it would not be entirely mistaken to believe that the attitudes of the Ledoversii family exemplify the attitudes of most Russians and Tatars in such mixed marriages.¹¹⁴

A Tale of Two Cities

Another factor that determines the strength of support for ethnic mobilisation is the existence or the absence of cosmopolitan and ethnically segregated urban populations. It should be stated that the process of urbanisation and ethnic make-up of the populations of cities are different for each of Tatarstan's 19 cities. Kazan is the most populous city with its 1.2 million population, whereas the population of the second major city, Naberezhnye Chelny, is only half that at 600,000. Ethnic Russians are in the majority in Kazan, Zelenodol'sk, Bugulma, Chistopol, Elabuga, Tetiushi and Bulgar districts, while Tatars are in the majority in Al'met'evsk, Aznakaevo, Agryz, Buinsk and Mamadysh districts.¹¹⁵

The high level of urbanisation in Tatarstan, where the urban population constitutes 73.6 percent of the Republican population, has contributed to the weakening of the support for ethnic nationalists. The Russians and the Tatars in the urban parts of Tatarstan have more internationalist and cosmopolitan views of other nationalities as compared to those in the rural parts of the Republic where villages are ethnically organised. Villages are either predominantly Tatar or Russian or Chuvash. In Aznakaevo town, all the population, even including the Russians, tends to speak Tatar in public life, while the overwhelming majority of the Tatars in Bugulma tends to speak mostly Russian.¹¹⁶

In the capital city of Kazan, there is a cosmopolitan ethno-demographic structure. The Tatars in the city are supportive of Shaimiev's policies, given that the support for Tatar nationalism is weak. The main demographic reason for this could be the fact that ethnic Russians outnumber Tatars in Kazan. In fact, in 1989, Russians made up more than 50

¹¹⁴ During my field work in Tatarstan, I stayed with this family, and had the chance of observing their orientations towards the Tatar and the Russian cultures during our long 'kitchen conversations'.

¹¹⁵ Mustafin and Khuzeev, *Vse o Tatarstane*, pp.18-19.

percent of the population in the city while Tatars formed only 37 percent of the city population. Although Tatars and Russians live side-by-side in central Kazan, the outskirts of the city have been divided into Tatar and Russian parts. The city centre seems to be a base for pro-Russian Tatar elites, while Tatar ethnic nationalism has some popularity in the Tatar sections of the city. Although there are many Islamic symbols in Kazan, religious fanaticism is not visible in the city. 'Kazan' in Tatar means 'cauldron' which reflects the multi-confessional nature of the city with 23 mosques, 16 Orthodox churches, a Catholic chapel and a Jewish synagogue. In Kazan, most Tatars prefer to speak Russian, and there are numerous mixed marriages. All of these characteristics of Kazan limit the support for Tatar or Russian ethnic nationalisms.¹¹⁷

In contrast to Kazan, where ethnic nationalist movements are weak, Naberezhnye Chelny is a base for Tatar ethnic nationalism. Although Naberezhnye Chelny's demographic structure is not very different from Kazan, the development of nationalist movement in this town is mainly related to the Naberezhnye Chelny's huge car industry.¹¹⁸ Moscow controlled the company and its decisions effectively under the Soviet command economy. Rais Balaev, the Mayor of Chelny from 1969 to 1985, worked with the KamAZ leadership to build the town. Between 1969 and 1989, the population of Naberezhnye Chelny grew from 38,000 to 300,000, with people migrating to the city from the outside and the rural areas. In the post-Soviet era, 40.6 percent of the local population is made of Tatars while 48.7 percent are ethnic Russians.¹¹⁹ The general director's office and the management of the KamAZ Company, highly-qualified specialists, were non-Tatars, and came from other parts of the former Soviet Union. The Tatars came mainly from neighbouring rural districts and were employed in unskilled labour. Between 1972 and 1978, the city witnessed an increase in the number of Tatar workers, which rose from 15.2 to 27.1 percent while the number of Russian workers declined from 70.0 to 58.2 percent.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Ravil Bukharaev, *The Model of Tatarstan under President Mintimer Shaimiev*, London: Curzon, 1999.

¹¹⁷ Mustafin and Khuzeev, *Vse o Tatarstane*, p.85.

¹¹⁸ McAuley, *Russia's Politics of Uncertainty*, pp.91-94.

¹¹⁹ Rustam Gibadullin, *Tatarskoe naselenie Naberezhnykh Chelnov v tsifrakh etnosotsiologii*, Naberezhnye Chelny, 1993.

Naberezhnye Chelny's municipality is controlled by Tatars led by the mayor of Naberezhnye Chelny, Rafgat Altynbaev, while the company is controlled by Russians led by Nikolai Bekh, the Head of KamAZ. In the city administration, there are fourteen Tatars and thirteen ethnic Russians. KamAZ has been performing several social functions, such as transport, health education and culture, for the people of the city as well as for its 150,000 workers. However, the privatisation of the company and its previous public services worsened the conditions for the Tatars and the city administration.¹²¹

As a result of the combination of all these factors, Naberezhnye Chelny subsequently became the centre of the radical wing of the Tatar national movement. In the early nineties, the leader of the Tatar independence party Ittifak, Fauziia Bairamova, moved from Kazan to Naberezhnye Chelny. Radical Tatar nationalists held meetings demanding that a Tatar be appointed to head the KamAZ factory. Russian flags were burned in Naberezhnye Chelny on numerous occasions and considerable humanitarian aid was sent to Chechnia from the city.¹²²

State-Dependent Economy

The state-dependent nature of Tatarstan's economy has also limited the social basis for interethnic polarisation between the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan. Unlike Russia's federal state, the state has continued to be the major player of the economic system of post-Soviet Tatarstan. The Republican authorities control the oil industry, which is the main source of income for the Republic. Moreover, Tatarstan's strategy of soft entrance to the market economy in 1991 was aimed at avoiding the high rates of unemployment resulting from the neo-liberal policies of economic restructuring, because this could lead to a situation in which the costs of reform would be born disproportionately by Tatars.¹²³

¹²⁰ Iagfar Garipov, 'Sotsial'no-etnicheskaia struktura rabotnikov i mezhnatsional'nye otnosheniia na KamAZe', in *Sovremennye natsional'nye protsessy v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Damir M. Iskhakov and Rozalina N. Musina, Kazan: IlaLII KNTs RAN, 1992, p.76.

¹²¹ Rashid Akhmetov, 'The Kama Automobile Factory Clinically Dead at the Age of 29', *The Jamestown Foundation Prism*, 17 April 1998.

¹²² Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'A Tale of Two Car Makers in Tatarstan', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.3, no.50, 17 December 1998.

¹²³ Mordii A. Nugaev and Renat M. Nugaev, *Kontseptual'nye osnovy issledovaniia Tatarstanskoi modeli sotsial'no-ekonomicheskogo razvitiia*, Kazan: KGU, 1997, p.201.

Unlike Russians, who were over-represented in management positions, Tatars were over-represented in blue-collar jobs, the most likely positions to suffer from major cutbacks.¹²⁴

The dependency of the population on the state has been very effective in curbing the support for ethnic nationalism in rural areas. In this respect, kolkhoz (collective farm) workers were reluctant to support nationalism out of traditionalist sentiment and fear of reprisals by kolkhoz chairmen. In general, even those rural inhabitants who voiced support for nationalist views remained largely passive. The villagers in Tatarstan mainly vote for officially approved candidates in local elections. Khasbulat Shamsutdinov, editor of *Vecherniaia Kazan*, noted that 'Shaimiev doesn't have to worry about the rural population. These people will vote for whomever the chairperson of the collective farm tells them to'.¹²⁵

For differing reasons, most economic actors have to maintain good relations with the Republican authorities. The dependence of the people in Tatarstan on the Republican authorities for their economic survival, however, deprives them of the financial resources needed for ethnic mobilisation. During my interview with Damir Iskhakov, he resented this fact stating that,

Today, there is an economic dependence on Russia. Privatisation did not result in the formation of a bourgeois class.¹²⁶

Due the dependence of Tatarstan's economic elite on the Republican leadership for their survival, most Tatar members of the economic elite refrain from supporting the Tatar ethnic nationalists in order not to annoy the Shaimiev leadership. Thus, only very few rich Tatars give financial support to the Tatar nationalist movements. For example, the Kashapov family are closely involved in the activities of the VTOTs' Naberezhnye Chelny branch. The family, which receives its earnings from its petrol stations, car parks and shops, sponsored the publication of books on Tatar culture, language and religion. In fact, Rafis Kashapov even became the chairperson of the VTOTs branch in Naberezhnye Chelny. He was able to elicit some support to Tatar ethnic nationalism through using his

¹²⁴ Rashid Akhmetov, 'Tatary i Russkie: Trudovaia mobil'nost', *Tatarstan*, no.2, 1997, p.19.

¹²⁵ Sarah Karush, 'Tsar of Tatarstan', *Moscow Times*, 23 October 1999.

¹²⁶ My interview with Damir M. Iskhakov, Ethnologist, The Institute of History, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan, Kazan, 4 June 1998.

financial resources and organisational base at the VTOTs.¹²⁷ This casts some light also on the previous section about why Naberezhnye Chelny is more nationalistic than Kazan.

Underdevelopment of Civil Society

The underdevelopment of civil society (*grazhdanskoe obshchestvo*), which refers to a self-organising society, in Tatarstan constitutes the last but not the least factor that impedes the growth of Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms in Tatarstan. Soviet totalitarian rule destroyed or greatly weakened its nascent civil institutions. Under the Soviet Union, pluralistic politics in Tatarstan was limited to interest groups like the industrial and agricultural managers competing for scarce resources allocated by the central administrative system. Under such a system, the promotion of diverse social interests is made dependent upon the approval of the state. The institutional heritage of this Soviet practice had undermined the scope for autonomy of social groups in post-Soviet Tatarstan. Consequently, social links in Tatarstan's 'civil society' have primarily remained vertical, between a group and the government, rather than horizontal, between groups themselves.

Accordingly, the Shaimiev regime has faced a society without stable collective instrumentalities of its own devising in the post-Soviet era. In Tatarstan, just like in the other parts of the Russian Federation, the development of civil society requires a highly organised middle class, not an all-embracing state. The fact that economic wealth is controlled by a small group of businessmen and by the state monopolies limits possibilities for the development of a powerful middle class. Indeed, it was this very absence of a viable middle class that led to the predominance of the state over the society.¹²⁸

Despite these limitations, there are several non-governmental organisations in Tatarstan. The multi-ethnic civil society organisations in Tatarstan include business organisations, trade unions, environmentalist organisations and feminist organisations. The main non-

¹²⁷ Gulnara Khasanova, 'Chally TPC Gets Eviction Notice', *RFE/RL Tatar-Bashkir Report*, 15 June 2001.

governmental business organisation of the Republic is the Union of Entrepreneurs of the Republic of Tatarstan, which was founded in 1992. There is also the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which is headed by Aleksandr Tarkaev. The workers are organised into the Trade Union Federation of Tatarstan under the leadership of Farida Gainullina. Since the Shaimiev regime has close relations with these 'non-governmental organisations', they are mainly under the control of the government of Tatarstan.

Tatarstan's leadership has not been worried by the activities of the non-governmental organisations that focus strictly on social problems. For example, the Association of Tatar Women, *Ak Kalfa*, is the most influential feminist organisation in Tatarstan. It maintains very good relations with the Republican authorities. Its chairperson Roza Tufittulova, who is the editor of the Women's magazine, *Suiumbike* (former *Azat Hatin*) has been supportive of Shaimiev's policies. The Independent Commission for the Protection of Women's Rights, which is chaired by Alsu Nasirova, and *Taianich* headed by T. Mironova are the other influential organisations for the protection of women's rights. There are other non-governmental organisations for the protection of youth, children and disabled peoples, such as the youth organisation, *Upravlenie budushchego*, the children organisation *Bala* and *Nika* for the disabled persons. In general, the Republican authorities have treated them positively.

The Republican authorities have displayed mixed attitudes towards these human rights organisations, in which Tatarstan's ethnic Russians are more active than the Tatars. Tatarstan's leadership has been doing nothing against the Committee of Soldier's Mothers in Tatarstan and the Union of Veterans of Afghan War in Tatarstan. The main reason for this could be the fact that these organisations have been critical of the policies of Moscow rather than those of Tatarstan.

Tatarstan's leadership has been critical of those civil society organisations that seek to promote human rights in the Republic. The Committee for Protection of Human Rights is the first such non-governmental civil society organisation to be registered with the Tatarstan Ministry of Justice in February 1996. Headed by Dmitrii Vokhmianin, this

¹²⁸ Zinaida T. Golenkova, 'Grazhdanskoe obshchestvo v Rossii', *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia*, no.3, 1997, pp.35-36.

organisation co-operates with several Western civil society organisations, including the National Endowment for Democracy, the Open Society Institute, and the Eurasia Foundation in the United States and the BEARR Trust Foundation in Britain. With the participation of the International Helsinki Group and the Westminster Foundation in Kazan, the Committee for Protection of Human Rights created the Association of Human Rights Organisations in Tatarstan in May 1997. Although Tatarstan's human rights organisations have not yet exercised much influence over Tatarstan's leadership concerning the human rights violations in the Republic, they could make a potentially very significant contribution to interethnic stability in Tatarstan.

Conclusions

To conclude, in its attempt to explore the socio-cultural dynamics behind the weak support for ethnic nationalist movements in Tatarstan, this chapter identified that the polarisation of the Russians as 'democrats' and the Tatars as 'ethnic nationalists' during the late eighties has not led to a significant nationalist mobilisation in the post-Soviet era. In fact, actual incidence and potentiality of ethnic violence in Tatarstan is largely overestimated.

The failure of both Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms in attracting significant levels of social support for their causes is not surprising in the context of Tatarstan. In fact, the performance of the Russian and Tatar ethnic nationalist movements in Tatarstan confirms Ernest Gellner's assertion that '[t]he number of potential nationalisms which failed to bark is far, far larger than those that did'.¹²⁹ Relying on our observations thus far on the ethnic nationalist movements in Tatarstan, we should also add that even when nationalisms do 'bark', it is far from certain that they will bite and, even if they do snap a bit, that the bite will find its intended target.

The Tatar and Russian ethnic activists were unable to produce a profound ethnic polarisation among the multi-ethnic population of Tatarstan following the collapse of the CPSU, the centralising organisation of the Soviet Union, in 1991, because the collapse of

¹²⁹ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1983, p.43.

the centralising institution is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for ethnic mobilisation. In fact, the pluralistic nature of Tatarstan's post-Soviet society works against a scenario of interethnic polarisation in the Republic.

One of the main factors that prevent the Tatars and the ethnic Russians from getting mobilised against each other is their 'self' and 'other' perceptions. Although the Tatar ethnic nationalists like to view Moscow as the only barriers to their cause, the Tatar perception of themselves as having common values and interests with the ethnic Russians in the Republic weakens the support for the nationalist objectives, which entail an interethnic polarisation. The long history of the 'collaboration' between the Tatar elites and Moscow, and the fact that the history of Soviet internationalism, which appears to have drawn these ethnic groups closer, make the Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalist arguments less popular and less convincing.

All the same, apart from the fact that Russians make up almost as large a percentage of the Republican population as do Tatars, a number of socio-cultural factors militate against radical nationalism in Tatarstan. The secular conception of religion, the widespread use of Russian, the common practice of mixed marriages between the Russians and the Tatars, the existence of a cosmopolitan urban culture, the state-dependent economy and the underdevelopment of the civil society prevent the Tatars and the Russian ethnic nationalists from pitting the ordinary population against each other in the name of nationalist causes.

In sum, the interethnic relations between Tatars and Russians have been relatively good, as evidenced by the above-mentioned factors and the very low incidence of violence between Tatar and Russian communities in the Republic.

The next chapter will explore the implications of the weaknesses of Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalisms vis-à-vis the elites in Tatarstan and Moscow on the development of Russian federalism in general.

5. The 'Tatarstan Model' of Russian Federalism: A Magic Formula for Containing Nationalist Movements?

The aim of this chapter is to evaluate how the post-Soviet experience of Tatarstan fits into the developments in the Russian Federation as a whole. For this purpose, I will explore what the Tatarstan example says about the nature of Russian federalism and Moscow's capacity to accommodate the demands for regional autonomy. I will also discuss how stable the post-Soviet constitutional, political and economic arrangements between Kazan and Moscow are by focusing on whether Shaimiev and his successors will be able to keep a tight grip on Tatarstan's politics, and whether Tatars or Russians could potentially develop successful radical nationalist movements in the Republic.

The post-Soviet politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism has been seen mainly through normative lenses in the related literature. Rafael Khakimov, Chief Advisor of Shaimiev and the Director of the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan, pictures the leadership of Tatarstan as 'civic' and the engine of 'democratic federalism' in Russia. In addition, Khakimov considers the centralisation of power and the imperial control of its non-Russian peoples as the defining characteristics of Russian statehood. According to Khakimov, the emergence of sovereign Tatarstan has been a means of dismantling the state structures of 'the empire'. Khakimov describes Russia as follows:

The peculiarity of Russia is that democratic laws have rarely been adopted there, and even when, they have been adopted they have never been observed. Two points are important for understanding the political situation in Russia: (1) Russian society has traditionally been undemocratic, and (2) the existing constitution and laws have usually been ignored.¹

Conversely, the current Director of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology Valerii Tishkov, who was the Head of the Russian State Committee on Nationalities in March-

¹ Rafael S. Khakimov, 'Prospects of Federalism in Russia: A View from Tatarstan', *Security Dialogue*, vol.27, no 1, 1996, p.69.

November 1992, is very critical of Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism and its outcome: the 'Tatarstan model' of Russian federalism. Tishkov has also been the main advocate of a 'civic' definition of the Russian national identity. For Tishkov, the formation of a civic Russian nation is hindered by the pragmatic non-Russian politicians, such as Shaimiev, who manipulate ethnicity to promote non-Russian 'ethnic nationalism'.²

Contrary to these normative positions, this chapter argues that the 'Tatarstan model' of Russian federalism signifies neither the formation of democratic federalism in Russia by the 'civic' leadership of Tatarstan nor the obstruction of a 'civic' Russian national identity by the 'ethnic nationalist' leadership of Tatarstan. Instead, this model constitutes a pragmatic solution to Russia's post-Soviet crisis of centre-periphery relations, which prevented any kind of Russian and non-Russian national identity, be it civic or ethnic, from fully developing. Although the federal leadership has been too weak to enforce federal laws and collect federal taxes in the regions, it was able to gain the support of regional leaders in fixing elections peacefully in return for asymmetrical concessions to them. Indeed, the 'Tatarstan model' of Russian federalism is an example of post-Soviet politics of survival in Russia, which is based on a formal constitutional order in which rent-seeking federal and local leaders hold real power on the ground.

The chapter starts with an analysis of the so-called 'Tatarstan model' and its impact on the development of asymmetrical federalism in Russia. Afterwards, I will discuss why Russia is not disintegrating. Next, the Russian Federation will be compared with the following democratic federations: the United States, Canada, Germany, Spain and Belgium. In the following section, the stability of intergovernmental relations between Moscow and Tatarstan will be discussed by examining the diverging views of Moscow and Kazan on federal reforms in terms of their centripetal and centrifugal tendencies. In the final section, the stability of interethnic relations between Russians and Tatars will be analysed by focusing on the orientations of Russian and Tatar nationalisms.

² Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, London: Sage, 1997, p.ix.

The 'Tatarstan Model' and the Development of Asymmetrical Federalism in Russia

Tatarstan's asymmetrical relations with Moscow could serve as a prism for analysing the post-Soviet development of the Russian Federation, which was originally a highly centralised unitary state in 1992.³ To establish the legal basis for its post-Soviet federal structure, Moscow signed three treaties with its federal subjects in March 1992. The first treaty, which is known as the Federation Treaty, was signed with the republics. The second one was signed with the administrative-territorial units of regions (*oblasts*), territories (*krais*) and the federal cities of Moscow and St Petersburg. The last one was signed with the national-territorial areas of districts (*okrugs*) and the Jewish Autonomous Oblast. According to the Federation Treaty, the republics could have their own constitutions, democratic elections, parliaments, constitutional tribunals, and even presidents. Although the Treaty described the republics as being sovereign, it made no reference to their right of secession.⁴ It is important to mention that the Treaty did not downgrade the status of the non-Russian republics to that of the Russian regions. On the contrary, the republics are treated better than other federal units.

Unlike the Federation Treaty of 1992, the Russian Constitution of December 1993, which was adopted two months after the decision of El'tsin to disband the Russian Parliament, prescribed a centralised form of government, with limited room for federalism. The Constitution grants extensive powers to the Presidency that eclipses all the other political institutions. Furthermore, it also gives the federal government an extraordinary amount of power to determine the structure of regional governments. For example, Article 77.2 refers to executive agencies forming a 'unified system of executive power in the Russian Federation'.⁵ According to this constitutional framework, federal executive authorities can demand that regional administrations implement federal laws, federal constitutional law, presidential decrees and even the resolutions and directives of the government. This demonstrates that before the signing of Tatarstan's treaty with Moscow, the Russian Federation had a very centralised federal structure.

³ Jean-Robert Ravieaux, 'Tatarstan v tsentre sozdaniia federal'noi struktury Rossii: Inventsiia suvereniteta-soiuza', *Panorama-Forum*, no.11, 1997, p.292.

⁴ 'Federativnyi Dogovor', *Etnopoliticheskii Vestnik Rossii*, no.1, 1992, pp.17-32.

⁵ *Konstitutsiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, Moscow: Iuridicheskaiia literatura, 1993, pp.56-57.

Tatarstan's power-sharing treaty with Moscow, which was signed on 15 February 1994, was the first departure from the federal model prescribed by the Federation Treaty of 1992 and the Russian Constitution of 1993. Vasilii Likhachev, Vice-President of Tatarstan between 1990 and 1995, hailed the 'Tatarstan model' as a successful example of peaceful conflict resolution in the post-Soviet space. He stated that,

[t]he Russia-Tatarstan model of interrelations has gained the world-wide recognition just because it secures the course to compromise, peaceful solution of controversies, cooperation, the regime of respect for human rights and rights of nationalities, balance of interests between the centre and a specific republic.⁶

However, the reality behind the 'Tatarstan model' is different from the rosy picture drawn by Likhachev. In fact, the particular arrangement that Tatarstan has worked out with Moscow is made possible by the existence of a number of specific prerequisites. The first prerequisite is that the federal centre should be willing to share some of its key federal powers with a specific region.⁷ Tatarstan, which claimed its own state sovereignty in 1990 and refused to sign the Federation Treaty of 1992, challenged the authority of Moscow in Tatarstan by adopting its own constitution in 1992 as the basis of legislation. Thus, the 'Tatarstan model' requires the willingness of Moscow, as was discussed in Chapter Three, to recognise the capacity of Tatarstan to legislate on specific federal matters, which are controlled generally by the federal centre, such as foreign economic relations. In this sense, the 'Tatarstan model' reflects the characteristics of both confederal and federal type of intergovernmental relations.⁸ Nail Aminov, Tatarstan's representative to Moscow, underlined the inter-state character of the Treaty between Moscow and Tatarstan as follows:

The Treaty is of an inter-state character. This is reflected not only in its title (The Treaty of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan) but also in its content, starting with the Preamble. The system of rights and duties embodied in it, and the mechanisms of resolving disputes, making amendments and interpretations, and responsibilities of complying with its

⁶ *Respublika Tatarstan*, 17 February 1998.

⁷ Nail M. Moukhariamov, 'Tatarstan Model: A Situational Dynamic', in *Beyond the Monolith: The Emergence of Regionalism in Post-Soviet Russia*, eds. Peter J. Stavrakis, Joan DeBardeleben and Larry Black, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p.230.

⁸ Alexei Zverev, 'Qualified Sovereignty: The Tatarstan Model for Resolving Conflicting Loyalties', in *Conflicting Loyalties and the State in Post-Soviet Russia and Eurasia*, eds. Michael Waller, Bruno Coppieters and Aleksei V. Malashenko, London: Frank Cass, 1998, pp.132-134.

norms, are binding equally on the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan in the person of their state bodies.⁹

The second prerequisite is that both the Russian and non-Russian ethnic nationalism should be weak and highly fragmented. In fact, as discussed in Chapter Four, both the Tatar and the Russian ethnic nationalist movements in Tatarstan have been too weak to prevent Tatarstan's leadership from signing a power-sharing treaty with Moscow. Tatarstan's Prime Minister Mukhammat Sabirov, who signed the Treaty in 1994, admitted that the Republican leadership pragmatically manipulated the ethnic card when they were aware that Tatar ethnic nationalism was very weak. He stated this point as follows:

It would have been a sin not to seek benefit from using the demonstrations of the nationalists and their endless protests. However, I always understood that there were very few such people in reality.¹⁰

The final prerequisite of the 'Tatarstan model' is that there should be a high level of pragmatism among the federal and regional leaders. In this respect, Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism*, as discussed in Chapter Two, have played an important role in achieving a higher status for Tatarstan in the Russian Federation rather than full independence for the Republic. Indeed, Tatarstan's leadership ignored the concerns of Tatar ethnic nationalists and the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan when it employed Tatar *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* in order to secure its political survival and gain concessions from Moscow. Tatarstan's 'special' autonomy in the Russian Federation has enabled the Shaimiev leadership to control the Republican economic resources and the local industries through its own controversial programme of privatisation. Furthermore, the Shaimiev leadership gained autonomy in the collection of taxes, the conduct of foreign economic relations and the control of the oil industry. During my interview with Prof. Leokadia Drobizheva, Chairperson of the Political Anthropology Department at the Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology, the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, she stated that Tatarstan's leadership promoted a variant of economic nationalism, which involved the use of the ethnic card to gain economic benefits. Drobizheva argued that,

⁹ Nail Aminov, 'Tatarstanskaia model': K godovshchine podpisaniia dogovora mezhdu Rossiiskoi Federatsiei i Respublikoi Tatarstan', *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 18 February 1995.

¹⁰ *Vremia i den'gi*, 12 February 1999.

The Tatarstan model is based on the recognition of two state languages and Tatarstan's control of oil and machine industries. It was this formula that accommodated the rent-seeking leadership of Tatarstan.¹¹

Damir Iskhakov, a well-known ethnologist in Tatarstan's Institute of History, is not as straightforward as Drobizheva in his analysis of the 'Tatarstan model'. For Iskhakov, the pragmatic nature of this model creates both advantages and disadvantages for the Tatar ethnic nationalists. On the one hand, the 'Tatarstan model' improves the existing imperial relationship between Moscow and the Tatars through broadening the autonomy of Tatarstan. On the other hand, for Iskhakov, this model cannot satisfy the Tatar nation since the state organs of Tatarstan and the Russian Federation created it. Because of its elite-centric focus, the model ignored the promotion of civil society in Tatarstan, which is essential for the development of Tatar nationalism.¹²

The Treaty between Tatarstan and Moscow has been presented by some scholars, such as Laurence S. Hanauer, as a model of coping with the threat of separatism in the post-Soviet space.¹³ In 1995, officials from Russia, Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova met the leaders of 'their' respective 'autonomy-seeking' regions (Tatarstan from Russia, Crimea from Ukraine, Abkhazia from Georgia, and Transdneister and Gagauzia from Moldova) in The Hague. Although Bruce Allyn, Head of the Conflict Management Group, which organised this meeting, hailed the Tatarstan model as a success of preventive diplomacy in keeping ethnic nationalism from turning violent, it is not very easy to use such a model for solving the other ethnic conflicts in the post-Soviet space.¹⁴ After all, the central authorities in these cases are not ready to grant the level of autonomy enjoyed by Tatarstan to 'their' breakaway regions.

While rewarding the Shaimiev regime in February 1994 for its conciliatory and pragmatic approach to the relations with Moscow, El'tsin rushed to punish the Dudaev regime in

¹¹ My interview with Prof. Leokadia M. Drobizheva, Chairperson of the Political Anthropology Department at the Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 24 June 1998.

¹² Damir M. Iskhakov, 'Model' Tatarstana: Za i protiv', in *Tatarskaia natsiia: Proshloe, nastoiashchee, budushchee*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1997, pp.11-15.

¹³ Laurence S. Hanauer, 'Tatarstan's Bid for Autonomy: Tatarstan as a Model for the Devolution of Power in the Russian Federation', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, vol.12, no.1, 1996, p.77.

¹⁴ Bruce Allyn, 'Gaagskaia initsiativa', in *Mezhdunarodnyi opyt uregulirovaniia etno-politicheskikh konfliktov*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: Panorama-Forum, 1996, p.147.

Chechnia, which defied Moscow's authority categorically.¹⁵ During the Chechen conflict, Shaimiev tried to persuade both Dudaev and El'tsin about the benefits of a political settlement. When Moscow finally sent troops to Chechnia in December 1994, Shaimiev described the Chechen War as a political disaster not only for Chechnia but also for Moscow.¹⁶ Indeed, Shaimiev, as the leader of the most prominent non-Russian republic in Russia, was well-placed to mediate the talks with Chechnia.¹⁷ Nevertheless, both Moscow and Grozny passed over the possibility of using Shaimiev to facilitate a compromise between their respective governments.

Tatarstan's leadership pictured itself as the creator of asymmetrical federalism in Russia.¹⁸ Shaimiev argued that the asymmetrical nature of Moscow's federal relations with its subjects was a product of Tatarstan's struggles for the rights of the republics in the Russian Federation. He also advised those regions without much autonomy, especially the ethnic Russian regions, to demand greater autonomy from Moscow:

I always express support for equal rights for all subjects of the Federation. The rights are there, but they have to be realized. When someone does not know how to realise his rights, he starts to complain that others have more rights. However, to be realistic, all the regions will never be equal.¹⁹

Following the signing of the Treaty with Tatarstan in 1994, Moscow started to give more autonomy to the regions based on individual rather than collective deals. Moscow offered special deals mainly to the more powerful regions in order to lure them away from forming regional coalitions against Moscow.²⁰ This approach of Moscow can be termed as 'asymmetrical federalism', in which different subjects of the federation can enjoy different privileges particularly in the realms of tax collection, natural resources and regional electoral laws. For Mikhail Alexseev, Moscow adopted asymmetrical federalism

¹⁵ Boris N. El'tsin, 'Ob ukreplenii Rossiiskogo gosudarstva', *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 25 February 1994, p.4.

¹⁶ Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'Put' vybrannyi Tatarstanom, mozhnet byt' priemlimym i dlia Chechni', *Respublika Tatarstan*, 10 September 1996.

¹⁷ Emil A. Pain, *Tatarstanskii dogovor na fone chechenskogo krizisa: Problemy stanovleniia federalizma v Rossii*, Moscow: Respublika, 1995, p.164.

¹⁸ Rafael S. Khakimov, 'Asimetrichnost' Rossiiskoi Federatsii: Vzgliad iz Tatarstana', in *Assimetrichnost' federatsii*, ed. Andrei A. Zakharov, Moscow: Tacis, 1997, p.69.

¹⁹ Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'Conflict Prevention and Management: The Significance of Tatarstan's Experience', (hereafter, 'Conflict Prevention and Management'), in *Preventing Deadly Conflicts Strategies and Institutions*, eds. Gail W. Lapidus and Svetlana Tsalik, New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1998, p.77.

²⁰ Steven L. Solnick, 'The Political Economy of Russian Federalism', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.44, no.6, 1996, pp.16-20.

in order to make its federal relations more flexible.²¹ The asymmetry is evident in the terminology used for each republic in these power-sharing treaties. For example, the treaty with Tatarstan describes the Republic as 'a state joined with the Russian Federation' while Bashkortostan is described in its treaty as 'a sovereign state within the Russian Federation'. Although the treaty with Sakha labelled the republic as 'a state conforming to the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the Constitution of the Republic of Sakha within the Russian Federation', Buriatia is cited as 'a republic (state) - a full subject of the Russian Federation', while Udmurtia is called merely 'a republic'.²²

Similarly, even in violation of the federal constitution, the constitutions of non-Russian republics have granted varying levels of autonomy to these republics in the Russian Federation. For example, although the constitutions of Sakha and Tyva proclaimed the prominence of their republican laws over the laws of the Russian Federation, the right of these republics to the ownership of the natural resources on their territory and their right to design and implement their own internal and foreign policy, the constitutions of some republics, such as Mari, have not gone very far in that direction.²³ The resulting *de facto* asymmetrical autonomy has arisen in large measure because the centre has defaulted on many of its jurisdictional responsibilities, leaving regions to fill the empty policy space.²⁴

Until January 1996, Moscow signed bilateral treaties only with the republics. The first bilateral treaty to be signed by the federal centre was with one of the resource-rich Russian regions, Sverdlovsk region, on 12 January 1996 (See Chapter Three). Poorer republics, such as Dagestan, Chuvashia and Tyva, had to wait longer than Russian regions.²⁵ It should also be noted that El'tsin signed many of these bilateral treaties

²¹ Mikhail A. Alexseev, 'Asymmetric Russia: Promises and Dangers' in *Center-Periphery Conflict in Post-Soviet Russia: A Federation Imperiled*, ed. Mikhail A. Alexseev, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, p.276.

²² James Hughes, 'Moscow's Bilateral Treaties Add to Confusion', *Transition*, vol.2, no.19, 20 September 1996, pp.42-43. For the texts of the treaties and agreements signed on the delimitation of powers by the federal centre with the various subjects of federation, see *Sbornik dogovorov i soglashenii mezhdru organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti sub'ektov Rossiiskoi Federatsii o razgranichenii predmetov vedeniia i polnomochii*, Moscow: Izdanie Gosudarstvennoi Dumy, 1997.

²³ Irina Sarycheva, 'Raspolzanie pravovoi sistemy - ugroza konstitutsionnoi bezopasnosti Rossii', *Federalizm*, vol.2, no.4, 1997, pp.124-127.

²⁴ Vitalii V. Ivanov, *Rossiiskii federalizm i vnutri-gosudarstvennaia dogovornaia politika*, Krasnoyarsk: Izd-vo KGU, 1997, pp.77-91.

²⁵ Mikhail N. Guboglo, 'Federalizm vlasti i vlast' federalizma', in *Federalizm vlasti i vlast' federalizma*, eds. Aleksandr N. Arinin and Mikhail N. Guboglo, Moscow: Inteltek, 1997, p.110.

during his electoral campaign in 1996.²⁶ El'tsin made these concessions to specific regions as a way of securing the loyalty of their leaders during the elections. Besides, the election of governors across Russia since 1996 has increased the devolution of power away from Moscow further.²⁷

Nevertheless, El'tsin's policy of asymmetrical federalism resulted in the weakening of Kremlin's grip on the regions since the regional leaders had already created their own regional institutions, and accumulated the necessary power to defy the orders from Moscow.²⁸ In response, El'tsin appointed Vladimir Putin, a former KGB officer, as his regional policy aide in 1998. El'tsin ordered Putin to collect detailed information on how governors spent federal subsidies in order to use this information to put pressure on non-compliant regional leaders. However, regional leaders forced El'tsin to replace Putin, who was appointed as the Head of the FSB in July 1998, with former Samara Mayor Oleg Sysuev, a less intrusive aide.²⁹ This demonstrated the strength of regional leaders vis-à-vis Moscow.

The fiscal collapse of August 1998 further weakened the federal centre vis-à-vis the regions since it deprived Moscow of the economic resources for keeping regional leaders in line.³⁰ In this atmosphere, the process of decentralisation initiated by El'tsin through the power-sharing treaties was seen as responsible for the problems in placing the centre-periphery relations on a predictable footing. In order to streamline the regions, the Duma started to demand that new treaties would need to be ratified by both the federal and regional parliaments rather than by the executive branches, and that existing treaties would need to be brought into compliance with the federal constitution within six months. In line with this policy, Prime Minister Evgenii Primakov put an end to the practice of signing bilateral treaties in September 1998. When Boris El'tsin signed the

²⁶ By the end of 1999, 46 bilateral treaties had been signed. The last one was signed by the city of Moscow on 16 June 1998.

²⁷ Steven L. Solnick, 'Gubernatorial Elections in Russia, 1996-1997', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.14, no.1, 1998, pp.48-80.

²⁸ Vladimir Ia. Gel'man, 'Regional'naia vlast' v sovremennoi Rossii: Instituty, rezhimy i praktiki', *Politicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.7, no.1, 1998, pp.87-88.

²⁹ Natan Shklyar, 'Economic Crisis Strengthens Governors', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.3, no.51, 22 December 1998.

³⁰ Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, 'Central Weakness and Provincial Autonomy', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.15, no.1, 1999, p.94.

federal law on power-sharing treaties on 30 June 1999, the Kremlin gained the legal right to bring existing treaties in line with the Russian Constitution by 2002.³¹

In order to take advantage of the demise of El'tsin's political power vis-à-vis the State Duma, several regional leaders formed *Vsia Rossiia* bloc under the leadership of Shaimiev. *Vsia-Rossiia* became an important player in Russian politics when it forged an alliance with Moscow Mayor Iurii Luzhkov's bloc *Fatherland* in August 1999 in order to create the *Otechestvo-Vsia Rossiia* (OVR) bloc, which was led by former Prime Minister Evgenii Primakov, Luzhkov and Shaimiev. Against this bloc, the Kremlin promoted Vladimir Putin who replaced Prime Minister Sergei Stepashin in August 1999, as its candidate. Putin was able to neutralize the OVR's influence during the 1999 State Duma election campaign by co-opting a broad coalition of other regional leaders into the *Edinstvo* (Unity) bloc. Consequently, the OVR bloc was unable to win enough seats in the December 1999 elections for the State Duma that would be necessary for transforming the Russian Federation into a more confederal type of state in which regional leaders would play a greater role than the federal centre.³²

Since replacing El'tsin as President on 31 December 1999, Putin has targeted the privileges granted to specific regions under Boris El'tsin. In his campaign against asymmetrical federalism, Putin's argument was that asymmetrical federalism has undermined the Russian Federation's legal, constitutional and economic integrity. He elicited a strong support from the majority of Russian regions and some poor non-Russian republics, which have not benefited from the privileges of asymmetrical federalism. In fact, the *status quo* of asymmetrical federalism was in favour of very few regions, such as Tatarstan. This served to alienate Tatarstan from Russian regions and some non-Russian republics. Consequently, Tatarstan has gradually become marginalized in Russian politics. Tatarstan's strengths and weaknesses in resisting Putin's drive towards a centralised federation structure will be explored below under the section on the stability of intergovernmental relations between Moscow and Kazan.

³¹ *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 30 June 1999.

³² Danielle Lussier, '1999 State Duma Results Communist Power on the Decline, OVR Could be the Swing', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.4, no.48, 22 December 1999.

Why is Russia not Disintegrating?

Many feared that the asymmetrical relations between Moscow and the units of the Federation would lead to the disintegration of Russia. However, this did not happen. Mikhail Filippov and Olga Shvetsova argued that asymmetrical bilateral bargaining in the Russian Federation has always been a part of Russian political tradition and was in fact 'effectively instituted before Russia's independence'.³³ The bilateral treaties provide an institutional recognition of these *de facto* asymmetries. Charles D. Tarlton argues that the capacity of federalism in coping with separatist trends depends on the relative strength of the forces demanding the unity of the federation.

To what extent can 'federalism' be expected to sustain the stimulus to and the need for unity in the face of the pressures of separatism? The answer, plainly, is: To the extent that the forces of unity are dominant. Unless there is some factor or set of factors which clearly and inexorably push in the direction of commonality, then the pressures of asymmetry will increasingly present themselves, making continued federal existence nearly impossible.³⁴

The fact that the Russian Federation is not disintegrating under the pressure of nationalist separatist movements is mainly due to two factors. The first factor is that the masses show no strong support for the nationalist movements in Russia. The other factor is the dominance of pragmatic leaders in Moscow and in non-Russian republics. These two factors, indeed, represent what Tarlton describes as 'the forces of unity' in the Russian Federation.

The main factor limiting the support for non-Russian secessionist movements is the demographic composition of ethnically-defined federal units. According to the 1989 census, out of a total population of 147 million, 108 million (73.5 percent of the total population) ethnic Russians were living outside the ethno-federal units, while 11.8 million (8.03 percent of total population) were living in the ethno-territorial units of some other nationality. Moreover, out of the 27 million non-Russians, only 10 million (7.02 percent) were living in their titular republics.³⁵ Only five republics (Chechnia,

³³ Mikhail Filippov and Olga Shvetsova, 'Asymmetric Bilateral Bargaining in the New Russian Federation - A Path-Dependence Explanation', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol.32, no.1, 1999, p.63.

³⁴ Charles D. Tarlton, 'Symmetry and Asymmetry as Elements of Federalism: Theoretical Speculation', *Journal of Politics*, vol.27, no.11, 1965, p.874.

³⁵ Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge, 1996, p.177.

Chuvashiia, Tyva and Kabardino-Balkariia) had titular populations as a majority. Although Kalmyks, Tatars and Kabardins form the largest groups in their titular republics, they do not constitute the majority of the population (See Table A4.1).³⁶ However, the lack of ethnic concentration did not stop some republics, such as Kareliia, Khakassia and Komi, from being in the forefront of the so-called 'parade of sovereignties' in 1990-1991. Among the non-Russian republics of the Russian Federation, only Chechnia, Tatarstan, Tyva and Dagestan have historical traditions of independent statehood. Furthermore, their secession would be viable only if they had external borders. However, only Buriatiia, Kareliia, Sakha, Tyva, Dagestan, Chechnia and North Ossetiia have external borders. Another factor that weakens the drive towards secessionism is that poor regions in the margins of the Russian Federation depend on Moscow while rich regions in the heartland lack external borders.³⁷

Although non-Russian nationalist movements find it very difficult to attract strong social support, factors beyond their control play a much more important role. Donald Horowitz made this point as follows:

Whether a secessionist movement will emerge at all is determined by domestic politics, by the relations of groups and regions within the state. Whether a secessionist movement will achieve its aims, however, is determined largely by international politics, by the balance of forces that extend beyond the state.³⁸

Among the factors that are beyond the control of nationalist movements, we could mention the lack of international support for ethnic nationalist movements in Russia. In fact, the majority of international actors do not support anti-Russian nationalist movements because the idea of supporting such movements in post-Soviet Russia, which is ideologically very different from the Soviet Union, is not attractive for most states. After all, some these states also have their own secessionist movements.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.34.

³⁷ Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer, 'From Ethnicity to Nationalism: Turmoil in the Russian Mini Empire', in *Social Legacy of Communism*, eds. James R. Millar and Sharon L. Wolchik, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994, pp.86-88.

³⁸ Donald Horowitz, 'Patterns of Ethnic Separatism', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol.23, no.2, 1981, p.167.

The policies of the pragmatic politicians in Moscow and in the non-Russian republics constitute the other factor that is beyond the control of nationalist movements.³⁹ El'tsin's policy of granting concessions to the republican leaders deepened the divide between non-Russian nationalist movements and their republican elites. The co-optation of non-Russian regional leaders was facilitated by the fact that El'tsin's team of protégés and clients established informal political arrangements with non-Russian republican leaders. Such short-term political alliances have been central to federal coalition building taking into account the extremely fragile elite networks in the centre-periphery relations.⁴⁰

El'tsin's pragmatic politics of coalition building with the 'oligarchs' and the regional leaders permitted private interests and state institutions to become highly interwoven, creating a system of privileges that precluded equal rules for all political actors. The system of privileges that has significantly characterised the post-Soviet Russian politics and economy encourages the post-Soviet Russia's political and economic actors to adopt rent-seeking as a dominant form of behaviour. William Thompson gives a very persuasive explanation of rent-seeking behaviour in Russia's banking system, which is, I think, valid for Russia's federal system too, as follows:

[t]he transition rents associated with the system that emerged in 1992-98 still seem more attractive to most of the players than the uncertain and long-term benefits associated with the development of real intermediation, a project which at present has no 'sponsors' on the political scene.⁴¹

Likewise, Russia's federal and regional elites enjoy the privileges of the emerging federal structures at the federal centre and the regions. The short-term interests of these elites in the continuity of existing privileges prevent them from instituting formal rules of federal bargaining that could make Russia's centre-periphery relations more predictable in the long run. Because of its practice of granting privileges to regional elites, Vladimir Shlapentokh likens Russian federalism to the early feudal system, which involves the

³⁹ Mikhail A. Alexseev, 'Decentralization Versus State Collapse: Explaining Russia's Endurance', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol.38, no.1, 2001, p.102.

⁴⁰ John P. Willerton, 'Post-Soviet Clientelist Norms at the Russian Federal Level', in *Elites and Leadership in Russian Politics*, ed. Graeme Gill, London: Macmillan, 1998, pp.36-39.

⁴¹ William Thompson, 'Financial Backwardness in Contemporary Perspective: Prospects for the Development of Financial Intermediation in Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.52, no.4, 2000, p.620.

hierarchical organization of society, the privatisation of public office and the fragmentation of national markets.⁴²

El'tsin's political strategy sought to ensure the alliance of the federal and regional nomenklatura. He permitted regional elites to control the key aspects of the privatisation process in the expectation of political support. The strategy worked to keep the El'tsin administration in power, because regional elites and oligarchs supported El'tsin during his re-election as Russian President in 1996. In return, El'tsin named Vladimir Potanin as First Deputy Prime Minister responsible for economic reform and Boris Berezovskii as the Deputy Head of the Security Council. Anatol Lieven explained the success of the strategy of the El'tsin administration as follows:

The lack of civil institutions and traditions is, of course, a grave weakness for contemporary democracy in Russia and most of the other former Soviet republics. It helps to maintain the rule of deeply corrupt, self-serving elites who neither feel nor show any responsibility towards the people who theoretically elected them.⁴³

Despite the success of the El'tsin regime in controlling the state power, as Richard Sakwa argues, post-Soviet Russia suffers from 'weak institutionalisation, legal arbitrariness and declining state capacity'.⁴⁴ Moscow's failure to develop an institutionalised form of governance has made federal relations personalistic, and led to confusions in the divisions of power between Moscow and the regions. Daniel Treisman, analysing El'tsin's policy of 'selective fiscal appeasement' towards Russia's regions, found that El'tsin transferred large amounts of finances to those regions that had stood against Moscow in order to secure their loyalty. For example, the Kremlin had used the Federal Fund for Regional Assistance to buy off Moscow's opponents as federal transfers were made conditional on the compliance of regions. Besides, three republics, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Sakha virtually transferred no taxes to the federal treasury in this period.⁴⁵

⁴² Vladimir Shlapentokh, 'Early Feudalism - The Best Parallel for Contemporary Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.48 no.3, 1996, pp.392-393.

⁴³ Anatol Lieven, 'The Weakness of Russian Nationalism', *Survival*, vol.41, no.2, 1999, pp.54-55.

⁴⁴ Richard Sakwa, 'Russian Political Evolution: A Structural Approach', in *Rethinking the Soviet Collapse: Sovietology, the Death of Communism and the New Russia*, ed., Michael Cox, London: Pinter, 1998, p.198.

Nevertheless, El'tsin's accommodation of the regions, especially the ethnic republics (with the exception of Chechnia), owed less to his commitment to democratic federalism than to political and economic expediency. El'tsin described himself as a 'civic' politician by pointing at the fact that he accommodated Russia's ethnic republics. However, the accommodation of regional elites does not mean the existence of an inclusive democratic political order in Russia.⁴⁶ In fact, El'tsin turned a blind eye to those regional leaders who engaged in fraud and other undemocratic means to maintain their power as long as they supported his own political aspirations.⁴⁷ Moreover, the Constitutional Court, the legal body charged with adjudicating infringements of the constitution, has also failed to serve as a strong check on the regional calls for autonomy due to its low level of legitimacy in the eyes of non-Russian regional leaders. Besides, federal political parties, with the exception of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, are not fully organised at the regional level.⁴⁸ Finally, Presidential Representatives, who were authorised in the oversight of the federal budget, property and personnel at the regional level, were equally ineffective in dealing with regional non-compliance.⁴⁹ Such institutional weaknesses made it possible for Moscow to come up with pragmatic arrangements with the regions that worked to secure their loyalty to the centre.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, these arrangements cannot be described easily as a form of democratic federalism. In this respect, it is useful to compare the Russian Federation with democratic federations.

⁴⁵ Daniel S. Treisman, *After the Deluge: Regional Crises and Political Consolidation in Russia*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1999, pp.47-80.

⁴⁶ Boris N. El'tsin, *Zapiski Prezidenta*, Moscow: Ogoniek 1994, pp.57-143.

⁴⁷ Peter Kirkow, *Russia's Provinces: Authoritarian Transformation Versus Local Autonomy?*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998, pp.138-140.

⁴⁸ John T. Ishiyama, 'The Russian Proto-parties and the National Republics: Integrative Organisations in a Disintegrating World?', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol.29, no.4, 1998, p.409.

⁴⁹ Nikolai Petrov, 'The President's Representatives: "Moscow's Men" in the Regions', *Jamestown Foundation Prism*, vol.4, no.7, 3 April 1998.

⁵⁰ Gordon B. Smith, 'State-Building in the New Russia: Assessing the Yeltsin Record', in *State-Building in Russia: The Yeltsin Legacy and the Challenge of the Future*, ed. Gordon B. Smith, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1999, p.14.

Comparisons with Democratic Federations: The United States, Canada, Germany, Spain and Belgium

Before comparing the Russian Federation with democratic federations, it is necessary to discuss the capacity of democratic federations in containing nationalist movements. Concerning the relationship between federalism and nationalism, some scholars, such as Hudson Meadwell, argue that federations may stimulate nationalism because they provide potential nationalist leaders with patronage and other institutional resources that can be mobilised for nationalist ends.⁵¹ Nevertheless, it is very difficult to make such a generalisation concerning the relationship between federalism and nationalism since the federal practice of policy making might develop in authoritarian as well as democratic systems. Their impact on the development of nationalist movement could differ from case to case.

There have been two types of non-democratic federations: socialist federations and the Third World federations. In these federations, the central elites have instituted a federal political structure pragmatically in order to elicit the loyalty of regional elites to their authoritarian regimes. Due to the structural difficulties of harmonising the interests of regional elites with the federal centre's overarching state ideology and party control, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia disintegrated under the pressures of democratisation.⁵²

Likewise, authoritarian federations in the Third World are also ineffective in coping with regional separatism. With the exception of India, which can be considered as a democratic federation, the Third World federations maintain their territorial integrity due to the authoritarian practices of their central elites. It is remarkable that 27 of the 44 modern federations in the Third World have failed either by breaking apart or by becoming fully centralised unitary states. Even where a federal solution is successfully legitimated, such as Malaysia and Nigeria, it takes a centrally-dominated form.⁵³ On the

⁵¹ Hudson Meadwell, 'The Politics of Nationalism in Quebec', *World Politics*, vol.45, no.2, 1993, p.221.

⁵² Carol Skalnik Leff, 'Democratization and Disintegration in Multinational States: The Breakup of the Communist Federations', *World Politics*, vol.51, no.2, 1999, p.231.

⁵³ Philip Mawhood, 'The Politics of Survival: Federal States in the Third World', *International Political Science Review*, vol.5, no.4, 1984, p.521. It should be stated here that China has instituted

other hand, the democratic nature of Indian federalism shows that the key to success or failure in coping with regional separatism is not ethnic homogeneity, which India does not have, but democratic federalism and workable institutions.

Is the Russian Federation a democratic federation? Although Article 1 of the Russian Constitution states that 'Russia is a federal democratic rule of law state with a republican form of government', the democratic credentials of Russian federalism can be established by comparing it with democratic federations such as the United States, Canada, Germany, Spain and Belgium, instead of making such legal declarations.⁵⁴ In making such a comparison, each case will be considered as a pragmatic adaptation of the federal idea to meet the specific circumstances of a given country.⁵⁵

A well-known example of democratic federation is the United States of America, which became a federation in 1776. In *The Federalist Papers*, the founding fathers of American federalism, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, argued that American federal government should be strong enough to guarantee stability, but also sufficiently controlled not to threaten personal liberty.⁵⁶ Thus, a defining characteristic of American federalism is that ethnicity is not a defining characteristic of the federal components, but an attribute of individuals. This characteristic of American federalism is very attractive to the Russian politicians seeking to abolish non-Russian ethnic republics. In the absence of an American-style liberal democracy in Russia, this model could be used to discriminate against non-Russian nationalities. Besides, American federalism is very flexible.⁵⁷ Without exploring how the USA's flexible system of federalism works in practice, Tatarstan's leadership sometimes uses the example of Puerto Rico, which became a possession of the United States through a Treaty in 1975, in order to back its desire to

federalism since 1979 mainly for the economic purpose of attracting foreign investment to its special economic zones rather than for the political purpose of sharing the central power, which is controlled by the Communist Party of China, with its federal units. Gabriella Montinola, Yingyi Qian and Barry R. Weingast, 'Federalism, Chinese Style: The Political Basis for Economic Success in China', *World Politics*, vol.48, no.4, 1995, p.53.

⁵⁴ Midkhat Kh. Farukhshin, *Sovremennyi federalizm: Rossiiskii i zarubezhnyi opyt*, Kazan: KGU, 1998, pp.4-12.

⁵⁵ Ivo D. Duchacek, 'Comparative Federalism: An Agenda for Additional Research', in *Constitutional Design and Power-Sharing in the Post-Modern Epoch*, ed. Daniel J. Elazar, Lanham: Maryland: University Press of America, 1991, p.25.

⁵⁶ James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, eds. Charles R. Kesler and Clinton Rossiter, New York: Mentor, 1999, p.165.

gain an associated state status in the Russian Federation. For example, Rafael Khakimov, Chief Advisor of Shaimiev, supports this argument actively. For Khakimov,

[T]he closest analogy would seem to be the status of Puerto Rico, whose relations with the USA are set out in the 'Bill to approve the compact of permanent union between the United States and Puerto Rico (1975)'. Tatarstan, however, has certain peculiarities that make it different from Puerto Rico. These peculiarities are the result of Russia's post-empire traditions and Tatarstan's enclave situation.⁵⁸

However, Khakimov seems to be unaware that the level of autonomy enjoyed by Puerto Rico, which is very limited as compared to Tatarstan's autonomy in post-Soviet Russia, may not satisfy the current leadership of Tatarstan. Ignoring this very important difference, Khakimov assumes that the main difference lies somewhere else. Khakimov asserts that Tatarstan is different from Puerto Rico, because Tatarstan is an enclave within Russia, which is, for Khakimov, still dominated by imperial rather than federal culture.

Canada, which was formed by the British North America Act of 1867, is an example of democratic federation where ethnicity is a defining characteristic of the components of the federation. Unlike the federal units of the Russian Federation, however, Canada's federal units enjoy legally guaranteed autonomy. Canadian federalism is executive federalism, since it is based on intergovernmental bargaining between the centre and the peripheries.⁵⁹ Although Moscow considers executive federalism positively due to the executive's dominance in Russian politics, Tatarstan's leadership is more sympathetic towards Canadian federalism than Moscow. Just like the Tatars in Tatarstan, francophones in Quebec, the most outspoken component of Canada, view themselves as a separate nation, and the Quebec regional state as the guardian of that nation. In its relations with the federal centre, Quebec, just like Tatarstan, has attracted many

⁵⁷ Franz Gress, 'Interstate Co-operation in the USA and the FRG', in *Evaluating Federal Systems*, ed. Bertus DeVilliers, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1994, pp.415-419.

⁵⁸ Khakimov, 'Prospects of Federalism in Russia: A View from Tatarstan', p.76.

⁵⁹ D. Brown, D. Cameron, *et. al.*, 'Comparative Analysis', in *Russia-Canada Collaborative Federalism Project: Federalism-Structures and Practices*, eds. V. Benevolenskii and D. Brown, Moscow: Moscow Branch of Russian Science Foundation, 1996, pp.95-120.

concessions from Ottawa precisely because of its credible independence movement.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the level of Canadian democracy is missing both in Tatarstan and Moscow.

Another democratic federation that could be compared to the Russian Federation is Germany. The main characteristic of the German system is that in the aftermath of the Second World War, it was deliberately devised by the Allied Powers to preclude the centralisation of power and the resurgence of German nationalism. Similarly, Russian federalism is legitimised as a method of precluding the resurgence of Soviet communism as well as the possibility of totalitarian re-centralisation of power. Unlike the Russian Federation, however, Germany is geographically small, and therefore, lacks comparable regionally-based national identities, divergent economic structures or distinctive political traditions. It is also characterised by cultural and linguistic homogeneity and is less threatened by centrifugal forces.⁶¹ Although the politicians in Moscow would be more than happy to turn Russia into a federation organised into territorial divisions based on the German *länder* model, non-Russian regional leaders, including Shaimiev, criticise German federalism for its weakness in securing the privileges of ethnic minorities.⁶²

The Russian Federation can also be compared to Spain, which is not formally a federation yet, in terms of the role of decentralisation in forming democratic regimes. The post-Franco Spanish Constitution, which was adopted in 1978, granted autonomy to Spain's seventeen autonomous regions.⁶³ According to the Spanish Constitution, there are six co-official languages. Just like the Russian Federation, the Spanish system is asymmetric in the fields of public order and international economic ties. For example, the Basque Country with its elected parliament and President alone among the seventeen autonomous communities has its own police force (subject to oversight from Madrid).⁶⁴ Tatarstan is similar to Catalonia rather than the Basque Country, where some militant

⁶⁰ Ramsay Cook, *Canada, Quebec, and the Uses of Nationalism*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986, pp.48-59.

⁶¹ Joan Price Boase, 'Faces of Asymmetry: German and Canadian Federalism', in *Evaluating Federal Systems*, ed. Bertus DeVilliers, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1994, p.99.

⁶² Elizabeth Teague, 'Center-Periphery Relations in the Russian Federation', in *National Identity and Ethnicity in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, ed. Roman Szporluk, Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1994, p.31.

⁶³ Robert Agranoff and Juan Gallarin, 'Toward Federal Democracy in Spain: An Examination of Intergovernmental Relations', *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, vol.27, no.4, 1997, pp.1-3.

⁶⁴ Alistair Hennessy, 'The Renaissance of Federal Ideas in Contemporary Spain', in *Federalism and Nationalism*, ed. Murray Forsyth, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1989, p.22.

Basque ethnic nationalists (ETA), unlike Tatar ethnic nationalists, have actually used violence to achieve their goals. Just like Tatarstan's leadership, the leadership of Catalonia presses for autonomy while seeking to maximise its influence in Spanish national politics.⁶⁵

Belgium, which transformed itself from a unitary state into a federation in 1993, resembles the Russian Federation. In fact, Moscow started its process of federalisation only in 1992, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was a federation only in name. Unlike the Russian Federation where the party system is very weak, and the parliament is dominated by the Presidency, the existence of a democratic party system and the parliamentary system contribute to the strength of Belgian democratic federalism. Belgium has separate parliaments for Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels. The three regions hold primary responsibility for economic development, public works, transportation and foreign trade. The functions of the federal government include defence, foreign affairs, social security, management of the public debt, and the criminal court system.⁶⁶ In March 1999, the Flemish Community Parliament adopted five resolutions that would create a confederal system. In response, all the francophone political parties threatened to block the formation of a new federal government. It was an alliance of the francophone and Flemish wings of the free-market right, the socialist left and the ecologists that secured the unity of Belgium in the June 1999 elections, when the conservative parties were defeated by this coalition.⁶⁷ This shows the role of democratic federalism in coping with secessionism.

Despite some similarities on the surface between the Russian Federation and several democratic federations, the Russian Federation differs substantially from democratic federations, which, in principle, achieve political unity in cultural diversity.⁶⁸ Besides, democratic federalism involves a clear and guaranteed delimitation of responsibilities between the federal centre and the regions. In fact, only constitutional democracies could provide credible guarantees and the institutionally embedded mechanisms, which help

⁶⁵ Michael Keating, *Nations against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland*, London: Macmillan, 1996, p.161.

⁶⁶ Patrick Peeters, 'Federalism: A Comparative Perspective – Belgium Transforms from a Unitary to a Federal State', in *Evaluating Federal Systems*, ed. Bertus DeVilliers, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1994, pp.195-197.

⁶⁷ Tony Judt, 'Is There a Belgium?' *New York Review of Books*, vol.46, no.19, 1999, pp.49-53.

ensure that the law-making prerogatives of the sub-units will be respected.⁶⁹ In this respect, although Moscow tolerates regional diversity and regional asymmetries of socio-economic development and of legal status, the Russian Federation's reluctance to give a stable legal recognition to these asymmetries makes it less democratic.⁷⁰

Furthermore, although the Russian Federation incorporates regional units electorally into the federal decision-making structure through representation in both the Federation Council and the State Duma chambers of the Federal Assembly, it does not secure the democratic representation of Russia's ethnic minorities. Even if the Russian Parliament accurately reflected the country's population, which is 82 percent Russian, representatives of ethnic groups would be in a clear minority and hence unable to influence decision-making. The more the representatives of the republics feel marginalized from power at the federal level, the more they could insist on dominating the power positions in their regions.⁷¹ As a consequence, the resulting low level of the representation of Russians in the administration of ethnic republics constitutes a source of tension with the local Russian populations.

The existence of federal institutional arrangements in Russia does not mean that Russia has instituted democratic federalism fully. Edward W. Walker claims that Russian Constitution does not create a reliable basis for democratic federalism since it granted extensive powers to the Presidency.⁷² Besides, Russia's limited experience with democracy and lack of traditions of compromise and consensus go against democratic federalist culture, which involves loyalty to, respect for and participation in both the regional and the federal levels of government. Although Moscow concludes attractive power-sharing treaties, problems crop up in actually honouring treaty obligations. This shows the underdevelopment of democratic federalist political culture in Russia. It seems that it could take a very long time to institute a democratic federation fully in Russia. In

⁶⁸ Peter King, *Federalism and Federation*, London: Croom Helm, 1982, p.143.

⁶⁹ For a detailed analysis of the fundamental yardsticks of federalism, see Ivo D. Duchacek, *Comparative Federalism: The Territorial Dimension of Federalism*, New York: University Press of America, 1987, pp.207-208.

⁷⁰ Alfred Stephan, 'Russian Federalism in Comparative Perspective', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.16, no.2, 2000, p.134.

⁷¹ Graham Smith, 'Ethnopolitics of Federation without Federalism', in *Russia in Transition: Politics, Privatization and Inequality*, ed. David Lane, London: Longman, 1995, pp.21-23.

⁷² Edward W. Walker, 'Federalism-Russian Style: The Federation Provisions in Russia's New Constitution', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.43, no.4, 1995, p.3.

order to develop such a democratic federation, Moscow needs to maintain, above all, its stability. Paradoxically, however, the underdevelopment of a democratic federalist culture in Russia endangers the stability of the Russian Federation both at the intergovernmental and at the interethnic levels.⁷³

The Stability of Intergovernmental Relations between Moscow and Kazan

The stability of federations, as Geoffrey Sawer argues, depends on 'the existence of a degree of *guaranteed autonomy* for geographically distributed governments operating directly on the citizen'.⁷⁴ Therefore, the federal stability is closely related to the federal centre's relations with the regional government and citizenry. In this respect, the stability of Tatarstan's federal arrangements with Moscow is contingent on the stability of the intergovernmental relations between Moscow and Tatarstan and the maintenance of inter-ethnic peace between Russians and Tatars.

According to Gail W. Lapidus, the main problem in Moscow's intergovernmental relations with the federal subjects, including Tatarstan, stems from the lack of a fundamental agreement over the general rules of Russian federalism, because this leads to conflicts over jurisdiction and resource allocation.⁷⁵ This can be explained by the fact that federal and regional leaders understand federalism in strategic terms as a means of preserving the privileges of political elites in both the centre and the regions. It is not generally understood as a means for making Russia's political institutions more accountable and democratic.⁷⁶ Consequently, federal relations in Russia have become far from being open and transparent, and there is very little trust between the federal centre and the regions.⁷⁷

⁷³ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Federalizm i demokratiia: Slozhnyi balans', *Politicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.8, no.6, 1997, pp.170-173.

⁷⁴ Geoffrey Sawer, *Modern Federalism*, Victoria, Australia: Pitman, 1976, p.152.

⁷⁵ Gail W. Lapidus, 'Asymmetrical Federalism and State Breakdown in Russia', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.15, no.1, 1999, pp.76-80.

⁷⁶ Nicholas J. Lynn Alexei V. Novikov, 'Refederalizing Russia: Debates on the Idea of Federalism in Russia', *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, vol.27, no.2, 1997, p.187.

⁷⁷ Vladimir Shlapentokh, Roman Levita and Mikhail Loiberg, *From Submission to Rebellion: The Provinces versus the Center in Russia*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997, p.8.

Since no general consensus exists on federal norms, the leadership factor has become the defining characteristic of the intergovernmental relations between Moscow and Tatarstan. Emil Pain, Advisor of Boris El'tsin on ethnic relations, pointed out the unique nature of Tatarstan's Treaty with Moscow, and the difficulties of renegotiating such a treaty again. Pain argued that,

What I shall not recommend to anyone is a replay of the process of concluding such a Treaty. Not because it is bad, but because many of its aspects are unique and cannot be repeated. The fact is that if there were no Shaimiev in Tatarstan, there would be no Treaty... Much in the process of preparing such treaties depends not only on working groups and experts, but also on personal gentlemanly agreements, when the leaders meet in private. In order to secure a positive outcome, personal trust is required. In this regard, the personal relationship between El'tsin and Shaimiev played its role.⁷⁸

In fact, Tatarstan's stability depends on Mintimer Shaimiev. It is unclear what would happen when Shaimiev steps down or dies. In October 1999, the federal government adopted a law, which limits the terms of regional leaders in office to two 5-year terms. Article 108 of Tatarstan's constitution, however, does not require such term limits for Tatarstan's President.⁷⁹ A potentially destabilising conflict between Moscow and Tatarstan was avoided when it was ruled that the federal law would not come into effect until October 2001. This ruling allowed Shaimiev to be re-elected for a third term as the President of Tatarstan at the age of 64 on 25 March 2001. According to the election results, Shaimiev received 79,29 percent of the votes, clearly ahead of his opponents: Sergei Shashurin (5.84 percent); Ivan Grachev (5.54 percent); Robert Sadykov (4.47 percent) and Aleksandr Federov (0.49 percent).⁸⁰

The significance of informal factors confirms that Tatarstan's problematic relationship with Moscow requires a considerable degree of pragmatism. Confrontational politics in Moscow or Kazan could have a negative effect on the negotiations that are required to manage their complicated relationship. Out of the 57 items of authority enumerated in the Treaty, Russia acquired power over 42 items, including 17 exclusive items and 25 joint items, while Tatarstan retained jurisdiction over 15 items of power. If a strong nationalist

⁷⁸ Emil A. Pain, 'Opyt vzaimootnoshenii Tatarstana i Rossii', in *Mezhdunarodnyi opyt uregulirovaniia etno-politicheskikh konfliktov* ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: Panorama-Forum, 1996, pp.15-16.

⁷⁹ Anna Paretskaya, 'Tatarstan's Constitution Amended', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.1, no.15, 4 December 1996.

government were to come to power in Tatarstan, the joint authority could easily become a source of friction between Moscow and Tatarstan. However, if a compliant regime existed in the Republic, Tatarstan's control over 15 items of authority would pale into insignificance.

In this respect, the stability of intergovernmental relations could easily be endangered by the diverging views of Moscow and Kazan on federal reforms. While Moscow's proposals for federal reform seek to strengthen the centripetal dynamics, Tatarstan's position on the question of federal reform tends to promote centrifugal dynamics in the Russian Federation.

Moscow, Federal Reforms and Centripetal Dynamics

Moscow's attempts at carrying out federal reforms are oriented towards empowering centripetal dynamics in the Russian Federation. This involves unilateral attempts by the federal centre at revising Tatarstan's power-sharing Treaty with Moscow in a more centralising direction. Under the leadership of Boris El'tsin between 1992 and 1999, Moscow viewed federal reform as a mechanism of equalising the level of autonomy of Tatarstan with the rest of the federation. El'tsin explained his understanding of federalism in his election programme of 1996 as follows:

What do I mean by real federalism? Real federalism is the territorial form of democracy; the democratisation of public life in Russia requires the federalisation of relations between the centre and the regions. It is the strict delimitation of functions and ownership between the federal and regional authorities; but it is not a 'divorce' between them - rather it is a guarantee of close co-operation for the good of all Russia's citizens. Federalism is the guarantee of the state's integrity, since the regions have no reason to seek to secede from Russia if their independent development is already guaranteed. At the same time federalism is the means of constructing a unified state, not a confederation, because special measures are here envisaged to guard against the federation's being shaken apart into some kind of union of autonomous states. Finally, federalism is the flexible combination of three levels of power: federal, regional, and local, in which a special role is assigned to local self-government, without which neither federalism itself nor true democracy can exist.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Gulnara Khasanova, 'Shaimiev Overwhelmingly Reelected', *RFE/RL Tatar-Bashkir Daily Report*, 26 March 2001.

⁸¹ *Rossiiskie vesti* 1 June 1996.

El'tsin's understanding of federalism underscores the need to carry out federal reforms that could re-centralise the power in the Russian Federation. However, as discussed above, Moscow was not strong enough to implement the federal reforms that could harm the interests of regional leaders. That is why El'tsin deemed it better to appease regional leaders through making concessions from the centralising federal reforms.

The centralising federal reforms gained momentum in 2000 when Vladimir Putin, a former KGB officer, replaced El'tsin as the President of the Russian Federation. Putin's war in Chechnia, which re-started in 1999, has already sent a message to non-Russian regions, such as Tatarstan, that secession was not an option. Putin scored a major triumph in his campaign to reassert federal supremacy during a trip to the republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan in 22-23 March 2000.⁸² Relying on the support coming from the security services and his popularity in the eyes of the Russians, Putin started to carry out his centralising federal reforms in May 2000. He sought to weaken the regional leaders first by creating seven macro regions as new layers of authority between Moscow and the federal units for dealing with regional problems. These macro regions and their capitals are as follows: Central (Moscow), Northwestern (St. Petersburg), Southern (Rostov na Donu), Volga (Nizhnii Novgorod), Ural (Ekaterinburg), Siberia (Novosibirsk) and Far Eastern (Vladivostok).⁸³ Moreover, Putin changed the composition of the Council of the Federation through replacing the elected regional leaders with their appointees. Furthermore, Putin gained a *de facto* power to appoint 'temporary' presidential appointees as governors if the Supreme Court removes a governor guilty of two or more violations of federal legislation. In addition, Putin eliminated the financial influence of regional governments over the local law enforcement bodies through financing the courts and the police directly from the federal budget.⁸⁴

Putin's federal reforms seem to create a new bureaucratic structure that is completely subordinate to the President and to transfer the powers of the old federal bureaucracy to

⁸² *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 24 March 2000.

⁸³ Viktor Kistanov, *Federal'nye okrug Rossii: Vazhnyi shag v ukreplenii gosudarstva*, Moscow: Ekonomika, 2000, pp.18-30. In line with Putin's decision to create seven federal districts, the law on the admission to the Russian Federation and creation of new subjects in the Federation was ratified by the State Duma in 2001. This law provided for the merger of Federation subjects as well as the entrance of foreign territories (such as Abkhazia, which is a breakaway republic in Georgia) into the Russian Federation.

⁸⁴ *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 16 May 2000.

the new one over time. As William Thompson argues, these measures carries the risk of creating more bureaucracy in federal relations and there is no guarantee that Putin's regional representatives act in line with his wishes locally. Furthermore, Putin's centralising reforms make it difficult for Moscow to gain the co-operation of local elites, since these reforms are likely to undermine Moscow's authority in the eyes of some autonomy-minded regional elites, such as those in Tatarstan.⁸⁵ Robert Orttung supports Thompson's points by underscoring Putin's inability to shape the outcomes of the more than 50 gubernatorial elections that have taken place between December 1999 and March 2001.⁸⁶

In this context, Moscow finds it better to change the overall system in Tatarstan through changing laws rather than just attacking specific individuals, such as Shaimiev, in Tatarstan. For this purpose, Moscow pressurises Tatarstan's leadership into bringing republican laws into conformity with the federal laws. In line with this policy, the Russian Constitutional Court ruled that Tatarstan's declaration of sovereignty was unconstitutional and illegal on 27 June 2000. However, the capacity of Moscow to change the overall system in Tatarstan is limited by the determination of Tatarstan's leadership to pursue its own confederal version of federal reform through promoting centrifugal dynamics throughout the Russian Federation.

Kazan, Federal Reforms and Centrifugal Dynamics

In opposition to Moscow's centralising federal reforms, as was discussed in Chapter Three, Tatarstan has been in favour of a confederal-type of federation where the regions should play a greater role than the federal centre.⁸⁷ A confederal approach is visible in the arguments of Tatarstan's leadership concerning the question of bringing regional constitutions and legislation into line with the Russian constitution and federal legislation. Tatarstan's leadership maintains that the republican laws should take precedence over the federal laws since Tatarstan's laws are more liberal than the federal

⁸⁵ William Thompson, 'Russia: Putin's Power Plays', *World Today*, vol.56, no.7, 2000, p.16.

⁸⁶ Robert Orttung, 'The Hard Road to Federal Reform', *Moscow Times*, 28 March 2001.

⁸⁷ Engel R. Tagirov, *Tatarstan: Natsional'no-gosudarstvennye interesy*, Kazan: Izd-vo KFEI, 1996, pp.19-23.

laws. Concerning Putin's federal reforms, Shaimiev suggested that federal districts should concentrate exclusively on the co-ordination of economic relations. Besides, Tatarstan's parliamentary speaker Farid Mukhametshin, a close associate of Shaimiev, claimed that Putin's federal reforms are undemocratic, and could provoke protests from the radical Tatar opposition.⁸⁸ Relying on these arguments, Tatarstan greatly exceeded the 19 October 2001 deadline the federal government had given regions to bring their constitutions and legislation into line with federal norms.⁸⁹

After long discussions between Moscow and Tatarstan, a provisional compromise was reached in February 2002. According to this compromise, Moscow succeeded in removing the following clauses from Tatarstan's Constitution: 'Tatarstan is the subject of international law', 'the Republic is associated with Russia on the basis of a treaty' and 'republican laws are superior to federal laws in the Republic'. After the revision, Article 1 of Tatarstan's Constitution states that Tatarstan is a 'full subject of the Russian Federation' and 'united with Russia'.⁹⁰ In order to resist Moscow's demands on eliminating Tatarstan's 'sovereign republic' status, Tatarstan's parliament passed a constitutional amendment on 3 April 2002 under which the Republic's status can be changed only in accordance with a Republic-level referendum.⁹¹

As discussed in earlier chapters, Tatarstan's capacity to maintain its post-Soviet sovereignty and privileged status in Russia's federal structure has largely depended on its ability to manipulate the tensions between the Kremlin and its opposition in Moscow and the tensions between the Russian and the Tatar masses in the Republic. It is unclear, however, how long Shaimiev can accommodate all of Tatarstan's Russian and Tatar factions simultaneously. In this respect, the main challenge comes from some of Tatarstan's ethnic Russians, who feel that they are being gradually marginalized by the Republican policies that make it easier for Tatars to receive influential posts. A potential alliance of the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan with Moscow could limit the manoeuvring space of Shaimiev. In fact, Shaimiev's capacity to pursue his *pragmatic nomenklatura*

⁸⁸ *Republika Tatarstan*, 20 May 2000.

⁸⁹ Katherine E. Graney, 'Ten Years of Sovereignty in Tatarstan: End of the Beginning or the Beginning of the End', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.48, no.5, 2001, pp.37-39.

⁹⁰ Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, 'Tatarstan Prepares to Amend Constitution', *Russian Regional Report*, vol.7, no.7, 20 February 2002.

nationalism is contingent on fragmenting his opponents, be it Moscow or the ethnic nationalist movements in the Republic, as much as possible. Putin's federal reforms could make it increasingly more difficult for Shaimiev to pursue his pragmatic politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism.

Given the significance of the leadership factor in Tatarstan's intergovernmental relations with Moscow, the indispensability of Tatarstan's leadership both to Moscow and to the ethnic Tatars prevents any political personality from challenging Shaimiev's regime and his violations of democratic principles and human rights in Tatarstan.

Democratic Federalism as a Missing Variable in the Relations between Moscow and Kazan

Given the lack of consensus over what needs to be reformed in Moscow's relations with its federal subjects, including Tatarstan, a well-defined and just federal regime embedded in a constitution seems very unrealistic.⁹² That is why ambiguity has been a very useful tool for the stability of intergovernmental relations in the short-term. In particular, ambiguity enables both Moscow and Tatarstan to side-step the legal issues that are too contentious to tackle, and to concentrate on mutual interests.⁹³ Although this pragmatic understanding of federalism makes intergovernmental relations relatively stable in the short-term, it creates serious problems for Russian federalism. Apart from causing uncertainty in federal relations, pragmatic policies of the federal centre and regional leaders undermine the basis for democratic federalism in the long-term.

Since Vladimir Putin's rise to the Russian Presidency in 2000, Moscow seems to have gained the upper hand in its intergovernmental relations with Kazan. However, Putin's re-centralisation of power could have some negative effect on the prospects for democratic federalism in Russia, since this would motivate Russia's regional leaders to

⁹¹ Gulnara Khasanova, 'Tatarstan to Maintain Status Set by 1992 Referendum', *RFE/RL Tatar-Bashkir Daily Report*, 4 April 2002.

⁹² Graham Smith, 'Russia, Multiculturalism and Federal Justice', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.50, no.8, 1998, p.1393.

⁹³ Elizabeth Teague, 'Russia and the Regions: The Uses of Ambiguity', in *Transformation from Below: Local Power and the Political Economy of Post-Communist Transitions*, eds. John Gibson and Philip Hanson, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1996, p.30.

be accountable more to Moscow than the local people. Robert Orttung and Peter Reddaway make this point clearly as follows:

The central dilemma regarding the regional dimension of Russian state-building is how to hold the governors accountable to the people and the law (as such it is), without at the same time giving the Kremlin carte blanche to interfere wherever it sees fit.⁹⁴

Similarly, Steven Fish considers the state-led policies ineffective in democratic systems. Fish argues that,

Whatever specific forms intermediary institutions take, the state alone will not be able to structure interest representation and guide the country through the onerous and uncertain transition to capitalism – at least not without reverting to some form of authoritarianism and deferring the question of democracy indefinitely.⁹⁵

Moscow's re-centralisation of power carries some other risks too. It is likely that when the republican authorities can no longer maintain their autonomy, they could rely more on the pragmatic politics of nationalism. Tatarstan's President Mintimer Shaimiev clarified the significance of the politics of nationalism in managing Tatarstan's intergovernmental relations with Moscow as follows:

What worries me? This is a transitional period, and the centre can live with an asymmetrical federalism and treaty-based relations. I do not consider myself a naive person, and I think that when the political and economic situation stabilises, this question will arise in full force and we will move toward a symmetrical federation. Voices will arise calling for a democratic but uniform federalism. We have to be ready for this; it is a reality of life. Only politics that takes reality into consideration is real politics. But for this we need a well thought-out nationalities policy. Like it or not, we need a nationalities policy for Russia. A conception of a nationalities policy has been confirmed by the President but it is mostly to quiet the society and republics for the next year and a half or two. It cannot satisfy a multinational Russia.⁹⁶

In this statement, Shaimiev recommended Moscow to adopt a liberal nationalities policy, which is accommodative towards the Tatars and other non-Russian minorities. In the following section, we will explore the dynamics of interethnic relations in Russia.

⁹⁴ Robert Orttung and Peter Reddaway, 'Russian State-Building: The Regional Dimension', *The Russia Initiative*, Carnegie Corporation of New York, March 2001, p.110.

⁹⁵ M. Steven Fish, *Democracy from Scratch: Opposition and Regime in the New Russian Revolution*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995, p.230.

The Stability of Interethnic Relations between Russians and Tatars

Interethnic relations between the Tatars and the Russians play an important role in the functioning of Tatarstan's arrangements with Moscow, because Tatarstan's leadership has made the stability of intergovernmental relations dependent on the accommodation of Shaimiev's version of *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism*. This requires Moscow to impede the growth of Russian as well as non-Russian ethnic nationalist movements.⁹⁷

However, Russia's imperial heritage complicates the stability of interethnic relations in the federation. As Geoffrey Hosking says, the Russian Federation is not a nation-state, but rather a 'bleeding hulk of empire'. In the Russian language, the word 'Russian' has two meanings. In its *russkii* sense, the word 'Russian' denotes ethnic Russian people, language and culture, but in its *rossiiskii* sense it refers to the multi-national Russian state (*Rossia*) and its citizens. These meanings form the basis for ethnic (*russkii*) and territorial (*rossiiskii*) versions of Russianness.⁹⁸ Igor Torbakov thinks that the territorial version of Russian national identity has generally been used by the rulers of Russia in order to promote the statist rather than the civic version of Russian national identity.⁹⁹ In line with this observation, Vera Tolz argues that there are few advocates of civic nationalism in Russia, since 'voluntary membership of a nation, so central to civic nationalism, is still alien to the majority of intellectuals'.¹⁰⁰ Instead of civic nationalism, it is basically the dominance of the state over the society in Russia that impeded the growth of Russian and non-Russian nationalisms. Thus, in the post-Soviet era, as Richard Sakwa argues, 'the Russian nation is *not* substituting for the Russian state'.¹⁰¹

The influence of the imperial Russian national identity could be seen in the Russian citizenship law, which was adopted on 28 November 1991. By this citizenship law, all citizens of the USSR living outside the Russian Federation on 1 September 1991 were

⁹⁶ Shaimiev, 'Conflict Prevention and Management: The Significance of Tatarstan's Experience', p.74.

⁹⁷ Anatolii F. Zotov, 'Federalizm v kontekste sporov o "russkoi natsional'noi idee"', *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.7, no.2, 1996, p.85.

⁹⁸ Geoffrey Hosking, 'Can Russia Become a Nation-State?', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.4, no.4, 1998, p.451.

⁹⁹ Igor Torbakov, 'The "Statists" and the Ideology of Russian Imperial Nationalism', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 11 December 1992, p.12.

¹⁰⁰ Vera Tolz, 'Forging the Nation: National Identity and Nation Building in Post-Communist Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.50, no.6, 1998, p.1017.

entitled to obtain Russian citizenship, provided that they did not possess the citizenship of another newly independent state. Since this provision did not require former USSR citizens to move to Russia, many of the post-Soviet republics have accused Moscow for continuing its imperial approach to the question of national identity.¹⁰² Furthermore, the 1993 Russian Constitution defines Russians neither in ethnic nor in civic terms. The Constitution described Russians as the 'multinational people of the Russian Federation' (*mnogonatsional'nyi narod Rossiiskoi Federatsii*).¹⁰³ These examples show that the imperial version of Russian national identity continues to exert its influence in the post-Soviet era.

Boris El'tsin admitted the negative impact of the Soviet nationalities policy on interethnic relations in Russia as follows:

Young Russia inherited many problems from our previous nationalities policy. To these were added new problems triggered by the disintegration of the totalitarian state.¹⁰⁴

However, despite El'tsin's recognition of the problems in interethnic relations, Moscow has not yet been able to define a civic nationalities policy that could satisfy the core concerns of Russia's ethnic minorities. For example, the official concept of Russian nationalities policy, which was adopted in June 1996, prescribes that all individuals with non-Russian ethnic background should be integrated into the Russian society (*rossiiskoe obshchestvo*).¹⁰⁵ However, as Aleksandr Ossipov says, this approach prioritises the individual rights of Russia's non-Russian citizens over their rights stemming from their membership of an ethnic group.¹⁰⁶ The lack of collective rights for non-Russian minorities in this document signifies an inclination towards the imperial, rather than civic, form of Russian national identity.

¹⁰¹ Sakwa's emphasis. Richard Sakwa, 'Russian Nationalism and Democratic Development', in *Russia after the Cold War*, eds. Mike Bowker and Cameron Ross, London: Longman, 1999, p.219.

¹⁰² It was the protests from Estonia and Ukraine that necessitated Moscow to introduce a residence requirement in June 1994. Vera Tolz, 'Forging the Nation: National Identity and Nation Building in Post-Communist Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.50, no.6, 1998, p.1008.

¹⁰³ *Konstitutsiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii*. Moscow, 1993, p.3.

¹⁰⁴ *Rossiiskie vesti* 1 June 1996.

¹⁰⁵ 'Kontseptsii gosudarstvennoi natsional'noi politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii', *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 10 July 1996.

¹⁰⁶ My interview with Aleksandr Ossipov, Ethnologist, Chairperson of the Centre for Ethnic Studies at the International Institute for Humanities and Political Studies, London, 11 December 1996.

Given the fact that the stability of interethnic relations in Russia has been secured through promoting the imperial, rather than civic or ethnic, Russian national identity, it is important to ask whether Russians or Tatars could potentially develop successful ethnic nationalist movements. In order to answer this question, it is essential to explore the orientations of Russian and Tatar ethnic nationalist movements towards each other.

Russian Nationalism, Russian *Messianism* and Non-Russian Minorities

It is very obvious that the orientation of Russian nationalism towards Russia's non-Russian, especially Muslim, minorities is very important for the stability of interethnic relations between Russians and Tatars. The discourse of Russian nationalism has generally been constructed around the 'Russian idea', which is defined by Tim McDaniel as 'the conviction that Russia has its own independent, self-sufficient and eminently worthy cultural and historical tradition that both sets it apart from the West and guarantees its future flourishing'.¹⁰⁷ This Russian idea has its roots in the *messianic* tradition of Russian nationalism, which is defined by Peter J. S. Duncan as the view that the Russian people are 'the chosen people'.¹⁰⁸ This view has been important in defining the Russian orientation towards the Muslim minorities including the Tatars, because Russian nationalists have generally seen these minorities as people waiting to be enlightened by themselves as well as potential allies in Russia's rivalry with the West.

There have been mainly two versions of Russian *messianism* in the post-Soviet era: one is represented by Boris El'tsin's 'reform movement' and the other is represented by the anti-Western coalition of communists and nationalists.¹⁰⁹ In this respect, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and its leader Gennadii Ziuganov have played the leading role in spreading the second version of Russian *messianic* views in the post-Soviet era. For Ziuganov, El'tsin's anti-national regime is incapable of providing a national idea since the liberals highlighted individualism as prime value, and ignored what the masses are

¹⁰⁷ Tim McDaniel, *The Agony of the Russian Idea*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, pp.10-11.

¹⁰⁸ Peter J. S. Duncan, *Russian Messianism: Third Rome, Revolution, Communism and After*, London: Routledge, 2000, p.6.

¹⁰⁹ 'Politicheskaia deklaratsiia levoi i pravoï oppozitsii', *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 22 September 1992.

actually thinking about them.¹¹⁰ Ziuganov accuses also the El'tsin regime for being a puppet of the West, which, in his opinion, seeks to undermine Russia through 'the propaganda of debauchery and anti-religious sects.'¹¹¹ The marginal supporters of this version of Russian *messianism* include the Russian National Assembly, the Russian National Unity, the National-Republican Party, the National Salvation Front, the National-Bolshevik Party and the Russian Officers' Union.¹¹²

Concerning interethnic relations between Russians and non-Russians, there is no widely accepted ideological framework. Nevertheless, Eurasianism, which seems to have some popularity among the Russian 'national-patriots', seeks to bring under one political roof representatives of all major religious confessions and ethnic groups. Eurasianism, which was first articulated by Count Nikolai Trubetskoi in the 1920s and then developed by anthropologist Lev Gumilev in the 1960s, claims that Russia has a special role to play for Eurasian states and peoples who live harmoniously together. According to this ideology, there is an irreconcilable difference between Eurasia and the West, which can be removed only by the victory of one side over the other. The son of a KGB officer Aleksandr Dugin has popularised these views in his journal *Elementy: Evraziiskoe Obozrenie*, which started its publication in July 1992. In his book, *Osnovy geopolitiki* (The Basics of Geopolitics), Dugin revised Eurasianism by arguing that instead opposing the West as a whole, Russia should now form an alliance with Europe against the Atlantic powers of Britain and the United States.¹¹³ Dugin still continues to advocate a rebirth of the Soviet Union/the Russian Empire in a modern form.

The viability of the Eurasianist project necessitates the stability of the relations between Russian Orthodoxy and other religions, especially Islam, in Russia. Although secularism is a constitutional norm as stated in Article 14 of the 1993 Russian Constitution, conservative Russian nationalists seek to use the Russian Orthodox Church against the

¹¹⁰ Gennadii A. Ziuganov, *Rossia - Rodina moia*, Moscow, Informpechat, 1996, pp.1-9.

¹¹¹ Gennadii A. Ziuganov, *Derzhava*, Moscow, Informpechat, 1994, p.132.

¹¹² *Politicheskie partii sovremennoi Rossii i natsional'nyi vopros (Sbornik dokumentov)*, eds. V. A. Babintsev and A. F. Berdnikov, Moscow: Klub 'Realisty', 1996, pp.27-92.

¹¹³ Aleksandr G. Dugin, *Osnovy Geopolitiki. Geopoliticheskoe budushchee Rossii*, Moscow: Arktogeia, 1999. See also Dmitry Shlapentokh, 'Eurasianism: Past and Present', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol.30, no.2, 1997, pp.131-132.

growing influence of the Western culture in Russia.¹¹⁴ In fact, Patriarch Aleksii II, who became the Head of the Russian Orthodox Church on 7 June 1990, has not done much to reform the Russian Orthodox Church. Besides, Aleksii II refused to recognise the independence of the Ukrainian, Moldavian and Latvian Churches. For instance, when the Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev wanted complete independence from Moscow, Aleksii II diluted this drive by installing pro-Moscow Metropolitan Volodyinii.¹¹⁵ Reflecting this trend, the Russian Christian Democratic Movement, which was founded by Father Gleb Iakunin and Viktor Aksiuchits, has also been unable to bring the Russian Christian Democrats closer to the Christian Democrats in Europe. As Richard Sakwa observes, the Russian Christian Democrats are even unable to achieve the core goal of any political movement, namely organisational survival.¹¹⁶

There is a tendency in Russia to draw Russian Orthodoxy and Islam closer to each other in order to minimise the influences of 'foreign religions and sects' in Russia. The law on the 'Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations', which was signed by El'tsin on 26 September 1997, granted top recognition to Russian Orthodoxy, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism as traditional confessions of Russia. This law discriminated against the confessions 'foreign to Russia'. This group included Catholics, Protestants, Baptists, Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Scientists and various new age beliefs.¹¹⁷

There are different, sometimes conflicting views about Islam among Russian nationalists, since Russia faces the unique position of close proximity to Muslim nations, and has a large Muslim minority.¹¹⁸ It should be noted here that the knowledge (and practice) of Islamic rituals is very limited among Russia's Muslim minorities owing to the

¹¹⁴ Vladimir Wozniuk, 'In Search of Ideology: The Politics of Religion and Nationalism in the New Russia', *Nationalities Papers*, vol.25 no.2, 1997, p.202. See also Jane Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church: Triumphalism and Defensiveness*, London: Macmillan, 1996, pp.11-12.

¹¹⁵ John B. Dunlop, 'The Russian Orthodox Church as an Empire-Saving Institution', in *The Politics of Religion in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, ed. Michael Bourdeaux, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1995, p.28.

¹¹⁶ For a deeper analysis of the Russian Christian Democrats, see Richard Sakwa, 'Christian Democracy and Civil Society in Russia', *Religion, State and Society*, vol.22, no.3, 1994, pp.273-303.

¹¹⁷ 'Federal'nyi zakon o svobode sovesti i o religioznykh ob'edineniiakh', in *Vo chto verit Rossiia: Religioznye protsessy v postperestroichnoi Rossii*, ed. Aleksandr V. Shchipkov, St. Petersburg: Izd-vo RkhGI, 1998, pp.277-296.

¹¹⁸ Aleksei V. Malashenko, 'Russkii natsionalizm i Islam', (hereafter, 'Russkii natsionalizm i Islam'), in *Etnicheskie i regional'nye konflikty v Evrazii. Rossiia, Ukraina, Belorussii*, eds. Aleksei Zverev, Bruno Coppieters and Dmitrii Trenin, Moscow: Ves' mir, 1997, p.8.

secularisation under the Soviet rule. Moreover, since there are no reliable official statistics on the confessional affiliation of Russia's population, the number of adherents of Islam in Russia is generally determined by adding together the numbers of traditionally Muslim ethnic groups. Naturally, being a member of such ethnic groups does not necessarily mean being a practising Muslim.

The contrasts in the attitudes of Russian nationalists towards Islam are evident especially in the views of Aleksandr Prokhanov and Vladimir Zhirinovskii. Prokhanov argues that there is a need for an Orthodox-Islamic as well as a Slavic-Turkic alliance. For Prokhanov,

The World Zionist circles are slowly but steadily pushing Moscow towards a violent confrontation with the Muslim world. Such a confrontation (the El'tsin-Grachev-Kozyrev scenario) will inevitably lead to the break-up of Russia.¹¹⁹

Unlike Aleksandr Prokhanov, Vladimir Zhirinovskii unequivocally places Islam beyond the pale of Russian civilisation and agrees to put up with Islam while striving for a divorce from it. Zhirinovskii also renounces Islam and highlights the possibility of using it in the name of Russia's interests. He recognises fundamentalism and Islam as natural for the other non-Orthodox peoples outside the Russian Federation with which Russians can have pragmatic dealings. Zhirinovskii makes this point as follows:

Let there be Muslim regimes from Kabul to Tashkent... In Tashkent we should build more mosques, while the aircraft works should be evacuated to Russia.¹²⁰

Zhirinovskii's views about Muslims have found some audience mainly in Moscow where nearly one million Muslims live. Among the worst treated of the Muslims in Moscow, the Chechens are especially prone to being rounded up for violating the *propiska* system (residence requirement) since 1993. In a poll by *Moskovskii komsomolets*, on the views of the Russians in Moscow on minorities in January 1993, 53 percent of Russians had viewed the Tatars positively, (behind Ukrainians and Jews) while 11 percent had expressed negative views (behind Ukrainians, Moldavians, Latvians and Jews) (See

¹¹⁹ *Zavtra*, no.49, December 1994. Cited in Malashenko, 'Russkii natsionalizm i Islam', p.18.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.12.

Table A4.16).¹²¹ A similar trend was identified in another poll by VTsIOM in October 1993. In this poll, more negative views were expressed towards Chechens, Gypsies, and Azerbaijanis. Tatars, Ukrainians and Russians, on the other hand, were positively conceived. The negative view of the Tatars rose to 13 percent behind the Ukrainians, while positive views increased to 71 percent behind the Ukrainians, with do not knows declining from 36 percent to 16 percent (See Table A4.17).¹²² The hate against the Chechens reached its climax when the federal authorities blamed them for a series of bombings in Moscow in 1999. These evidence demonstrates that Russian views of the Muslims are not based on religious prejudices but on the strength of non-Russian ethnic nationalist movements.

Nevertheless, Russia's federal authorities are increasingly worried by potential of Islamophobia, the perception of Islam as an aggressive sociocultural religious system, in setting the ethnic Russians and Muslim minorities against each other.¹²³ Such a development could destabilise the interethnic relations between Russians and Tatars. Thus, Sergei Panarin believes that,

In general, Islamophobia that seems to have been born among ethnic Russians in the North Caucasus and Central Asia threatens to grow into a deeply entrenched feature of the Russian ethnos as a whole.¹²⁴

Aleksei Malashenko agrees with Panarin in that Islamophobia could have a negative impact on Russia's stability. Malashenko believes that it is wholly unacceptable 'to succumb to various "phobias" merely because we often do not understand the nature of our differences'.¹²⁵

In response to the treat of Islamophobia to the stability of interethnic relations in Russia, the federal leadership attempts to secure the loyalty of the Muslims through promoting a pro-Moscow version of Islamic identity. To this purpose, two political organisations, the *Nur* (Light) and the Russian Muslim Union, were formed in 1995. Former member of

¹²¹ *Moskovskii komsomolets*, 12 January 1993.

¹²² 'Ierarkhiia etnicheskikh stereotipov naseleniia', in *Intertsentr VTsIOM Ekonomicheskie i sotsial'nye peremeny*, no.1, 1994, pp.17-19.

¹²³ Aleksei V. Kudriavtsev, 'Islamofobiia v postsovetsoi Rossii', in *Islam v SNG*, ed. Aleksei V. Malashenko, Moscow: IV RAN, 1998, p.170.

¹²⁴ Sergei A. Panarin, 'Aziia glazami russkikh', *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 20 April 1993.

¹²⁵ Aleksei V. Malashenko, 'Islam v Rossii', *Svobodnaia mysl'*, no.10, 1999, p.50.

Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), Akhmed Khalidov was one of the founders of the Russian Muslim Union and Akhmed Yakhin, an assistant to LDPR State Duma Deputy Aleksei Mitrofanov, was at the top of the Nur election slate for the 1995 parliamentary elections.¹²⁶ Moscow's support to these organisations shows that imperial version of Russian nationalism could accommodate Muslims on the condition that Muslims refrain from politicising Islam to achieve ethnic mobilisation against Moscow.

Tatar Nationalism, Tatar *Jadidism* and Westernisation

Similar to Russian nationalists, who seem to be divided over the relations of Russians with non-Russian, mainly Muslim, minorities, Tatar nationalists appear to be divided into two factions over the ways of reviving Tatar culture. The radical faction of Tatar nationalists suppose that Tatar nationalism could develop through the politicisation of Islamic identity since this could polarise the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan against each other. On the other hand, the moderate faction of Tatar nationalists think that the support for Tatar nationalism could grow through the secularisation of Islamic identity since this could bring the Tatars closer to the Western culture, and emancipate the Tatars from the hegemony of Russian culture, in which Tatars developed their process of modernisation until the present time. This division plays an important role in preventing a successful Tatar nationalism from consolidating itself, and emerging as a credible alternative to Shaimiev's regime.

The significance of Islam increased gradually for radical Tatar nationalists since the early years of the post-Soviet period. Criticising Shaimiev's ideology of multinationalism for its inability to win national sovereignty for the Republic, Rashid Amirkhanov, one of the ideologues of radical Tatar nationalism, suggested that it could be useful to propagate a militant view of Islam for increasing the popularity of Tatar ethnic nationalism.¹²⁷ Initially, Islam had been used to promote pan-Turkism. Rafael Mukhametdinov founded

¹²⁶ Dmitrii Mikulskii, 'Muslims and Their Organisations in Russia', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, vol.16, no.4, 1996, pp.23-29.

¹²⁷ Rashid M. Amirkhanov, 'Islam in Tatar National Ideology and Policy', in *The Christian – Muslim Frontier: Chaos, Clash or Dialogue?*, ed. Jørgen S. Nielsen, London: L. B. Tauris, 1998, p.68.

the Assembly of the Turkic Peoples in 1991. In its second congress in Kazan in 19-21 April 1991, the Assembly of the Turkic Peoples of the USSR called for greater democratisation, a revival of religion, and greater economic and cultural co-operation among Turkic societies.¹²⁸

Radical Tatar ethnic nationalists also revitalised the idea of uniting the Turkic republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, which are separated from Kazakhstan by some 37 kilometres of the Orenburg Oblast's territory, which is populated mainly by Tatars and Bashkirs, in a confederation called *Idel-Ural*. In fact, such a confederation is a very remote possibility. After all, if a confederation between Tatarstan and Bashkortostan were to take shape, the Bashkirs would become a minority under the Tatar rule, as there are 2 million Russians, 1.2 million Tatars and 900,000 Bashkirs in Bashkortostan.¹²⁹ Being aware of this danger, the Bashkir leadership adopted a language law on 21 January 1998, which does not recognise Tatar as a state language along with Russian and Bashkir. Besides, the VTOTs was banned in Bashkortostan on 10 January 1999.¹³⁰

Having been disillusioned with the pan-Turkist projects, Radical Tatar ethnic nationalists focused more on politicising Islam to mobilise the Tatars against Moscow. For example, *Ittifak* (Alliance) Party and its youth organisation *Azatlyk* (Freedom) promote such a militant understanding of Islam.¹³¹ Ramai Yuldashev, the chairperson of *Azatlyk* says that,

It was so beautiful to watch Chechen troops marching and chanting, 'La ilaha illallah!' (There is no God but Allah). They have a mullah assigned to each unit of their army too! Their Islam is strong, which is why they are fighting so well.¹³²

¹²⁸ Rafael F. Mukhammetdinov, *Zarozhdenie i evoliutsiia tiurkizma*, Kazan: Zaman, 1996, pp.231-254.

¹²⁹ Ann Sheehy, 'Tatarstan and Bashkiria: Obstacles to Confederation', *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol.1, no.22, 29 May 1992, pp.33-37.

¹³⁰ *Kommersant' Daily*, 22 January 1999.

¹³¹ Rozalina I. Musina, 'Reislamizatsiia Tatar kak forma religioznogo natsionalizma', *Rossiia i musul'manskii mir*, no.12, 1997, pp.37-40.

¹³² James Walsh, 'Wrath of the Prophet', *Time International*, 19 February 1996.

In the same spirit, Fauzia Bairamova the leader of Ittifak, said that '[w]e've tried to stir up pan-Turkism as a unifying factor for all Turkic peoples of Russia, but this approach has failed. Now I realize only Islam may work.'¹³³

These radical Tatar ethnic nationalists have gradually increased their financial and doctrinal dependence on Middle Eastern sources. This dependence has led to a slight increase in the popularity of the Wahhabi movement which seeks to 'purify' Islam of the 'alterations' that had occurred over time.¹³⁴ It is important to note that 'Wahhabism' is used in Russia often to describe any radical Islamic religious movement.

The moderate Tatar nationalists believe that the Westernisation of Tatar culture could secure the survival of Tatar nationalism in the long term. Therefore, the secularisation of Islam and the revival of Tatar *Jadidism*, which is discussed in Chapter One, constitute the main pillars of moderate Tatar national revival in the post-Soviet period. Among the Tatar Muslim masses, the secular view of Islam, which is also known as Tatar *Jadidism*, is more popular than radical Islamic views. Apart from Tatarstan's leadership, the highly educated segments of the Tatars strongly oppose the Islam-based radical nationalism. The following views of Rafael Khakimov represent the mainstream view among the secular wing of Tatar nationalists:

Tatar Islam, which is also known as *Jadidism*, is EuroIslam. It differs from the Islam practised in the Middle East. In addition, the Russian culture has lost its cultural and moral supremacy in Tatarstan. Therefore, we adopted the Latin alphabet to be nearer to the Western culture.¹³⁵

Apart from secularism, Jadidism advocates also the westernisation of Tatar culture. That is why most of the secular Tatar intellectuals consider Eurasianism as 'a new ideological framework of Russian imperialism' that aims to keep Tatars under Russian rule.¹³⁶ During my interview with Uli Schamiloglu in the United States, Schamiloglu criticised the view that the closeness of Russians and Tatars in Tatarstan establish some basis for

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ Galina M. Yemelianova, 'Islam and Nation Building in Tatarstan and Dagestan of the Russian Federation', *Nationalities Papers*, vol.27, no.4, 1999, p.622.

¹³⁵ My interview with Rafael S. Khakimov, Tatarstan's Chief Presidential Advisor on Political Affairs, Presidential Palace, Kazan, 2 June 1998.

¹³⁶ Damir M. Iskhakov, *Problemy stanovleniia i transformatsii tatarskoi natsii*, Kazan: Master Lain, 1997, p.148. See also Mirza I. Makhmutov, 'Evraziiskii proekt – Vzgliad iz Tatarstana', *Tatarstan*, nos.7-9, 1995, pp.3-13.

Eurasianism. Schamiloglu argued that 'the Tatar understanding of Islam is very Europeanised. That is why Tatars seek to promote their process of westernisation without confronting the West in the name of Eurasianism or confronting Russia in the name of Islam'.¹³⁷ After all, there is no possibility for Tatars to exist without ties with the Russians and the neighbouring Finno-Ugric peoples of Udmurts, Maris and Mordvins in the Middle Volga. It must also be noted that 68 percent of all Tatars live in other parts of Russia outside Tatarstan. That is why Tatars and Russians need to establish a mutual understanding.¹³⁸ All these factors make the secularisation of Islamic identity the most attractive mechanisms for reviving Tatar culture.

Pragmatic Accommodation of Tatar Nationalism through Russian Federalism

So far, it was shown that both Russian and Tatar nationalists have been divided over how to promote their national cultures. It was also demonstrated that neither civic nor ethnic versions of both Russian and Tatar nationalisms have developed fully in the post-Soviet era. Although the basis for civic nationalism is weak, there is no strong basis for ethnic nationalism in post-Soviet Russia either. However, some authors, such as Bruce Clarke, exaggerate the danger of Russian ethnic nationalism, especially after the Chechen war in 1994.¹³⁹ The analogy of Weimar Germany (1918-1933), where an unsuccessful attempt to secure democracy was followed by the rise of a fascist dictatorship, has been widely used by such scholars. Similarities can be enumerated as follows. First, many Germans were scattered over neighbouring countries. Second, the regime was dependent on financial support from Western powers. Lastly, the fascist opposition manipulated democratic mechanisms to gain political power.¹⁴⁰ However, there are very significant differences, which are ignored in such comparisons. To begin with, unlike Germany, Russia did not surrender in a major war. Moreover, Russia does not have elites who are unhappy with the government and worried about their survival. By contrast, the Russian elites and masses are deeply divided. Last but not least, the imperial character of Russian

¹³⁷ My interview with Uli Schamiloglu, Chairperson of the Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, USA, 30 September 2000.

¹³⁸ Sergei Filatov, 'Tatarstan: at the Crossroads of Islam and Orthodoxy', *Religion, State and Society*, vol.26, no.3/4, 1998, pp.265-277.

¹³⁹ Bruce Clarke, *An Empire's New Clothes: The End of Russia's Liberal Dream*, London: Vintage, 1995.

¹⁴⁰ Aleksandr L. Ianov, *Posle El'tsina: Veimarskaia Rossiia*, Moscow: KRIK, 1995, pp.34-48.

national identity and the serious undermining of Russian institutions by the Soviet Union set Russia apart from the Weimar case.¹⁴¹

The existence of pragmatic uses of Russian nationalism as a mechanism for political survival substantiates the fact that Russia is not likely to experience the fate of Weimar Germany. To begin with, the El'tsin leadership refrained from promoting Russian nationalism systematically, since this could undermine the social cohesion in Russia further through provoking tensions not only between Russians and non-Russians, but also between pro-reform and anti-reform social forces. As Michael Urban argues, post-Soviet Russian leadership, unlike post-Soviet non-Russian leaders who held the Russians responsible for their underdevelopment, lacked such an image of 'the other' except for communism itself in order to achieve the social cohesion in Russia. However, the exclusion of the communists from the public life necessitated the adoption of policies that are not compatible with El'tsin's 'liberal' policies.¹⁴² Taking the advantage of this weakness of the El'tsin leadership, Russian communists have pragmatically appropriated the symbols of Russian national identity in order to secure social support for their policies. The manipulation of Russian nationalism by the communists even led Boris El'tsin to complain about the lack of a 'Russian Idea' in his speech on 12 July 1996:

In Russia's history in the twentieth century, there have been various periods - monarchism, totalitarianism, *perestroika*, and finally, the democratic path of government. Each epoch had its own ideology. Now we do not have one. And that is bad'.¹⁴³

At the local level, local politics plays an important role in the pragmatic politics of Russian national identity. For example, regions such as Novgorod link regional historical archetypes to the service of economic and political reforms. By systematically contrasting Novgorod's heritage as a medieval trade centre and the cradle of Russian democracy to Moscow's heritage of political and economic centralisation, Novgorod's local elites have

¹⁴¹ Aleksei Kara-Murza, *Mezhdur imperiei i smutoi*, Moscow: IFRAN, 1996, p.128.

¹⁴² Michael Urban, 'The Politics of Identity in Russia's Post-Communist Transition: The Nation Against Itself', *Slavic Review*, vol.53, no.3, 1994, p.733.

¹⁴³ Mikhail Lantsman, 'Prezident poluchil doverennym litsam naiti natsional'nuiu ideiu', *Segodnia*, 13 July 1996.

defined reform as a return to the 'real' values of a more prosperous Russian tradition.¹⁴⁴ Novgorod Governor Mikhail Prusak has argued that

If we turn to our past, we will see that in Russian history Velikii Novgorod was a city that could unite democracy, a free market, and other achievements of national civilisation with Russian traditions...In contrast to the strongly centralised model, which Muscovite Rus inherited from Kiev, adding absolutist tendencies to it, the Novgorod model is distinguished by great openness and democracy.¹⁴⁵

The diversity of trends in Russian nationalism is also reflected in the opinion polls on Russian views of secessionist movements and the defining characteristics of Russianness. According to a poll conducted in 1992 by the Institute of Applied Politics, the Russian attitudes to secessionist movements in the Russian Federation differed from case to case. To the question of 'should the republics demanding independence be allowed to secede?', the Russians responded that they could accept the independence of Chechnia more than the independence of Tatarstan. While 23 percent was in favour of unconditional independence of Tatarstan, 33 percent was in favour of conditional independence and 25 percent was in favour of preventing the independence of Tatarstan, with 19 percent being undecided. While 33 percent was in favour of unconditional independence of Chechnia, 32 percent was in favour of conditional independence and 16 percent was in favour of preventing the independence of Chechnia (See Table A4.15).¹⁴⁶ These figures show that the Russians are very keen on preventing the secession of the Tatars rather than the Chechens, whom they consider very alien to the Russian culture. In an opinion poll conducted in February 1995 by Igor Kliamkin and Viktor Lapkin, it was observed that to love Russia and view it as a homeland was a key defining characteristic of Russianness for the majority of respondents (See Table A4.14).¹⁴⁷

Although the dominance of pragmatism in Russian attitudes towards the question of national identity makes it easier for Shaimiev's version of *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* to accommodate itself with Russian federalism, Putin's rise to Russia's Presidency in 2000 has narrowed Shaimiev's room for manoeuvre. Under El'tsin,

¹⁴⁴ Nicolai Petro, 'The Novgorod Region: A Russian Success Story', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.15, no.3, 1999, pp.235-261.

¹⁴⁵ Mikhail Prusak, *Rossiia na rubezhe - Strategiia vlasti*, Novgorod, 1998, p.1.

¹⁴⁶ Cited in Matthew Wyman, *Public Opinion in Post-Communist Russia*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997, p.170.

Tatarstan's leadership effectively blackmailed Moscow, claiming that if they lost their privileges, they would not be able to hold back a rising wave of ethnic and religious violence. When Putin came to power, he started a campaign against nationalist and religious extremism, first in Chechnia and then in Russia in general. Especially after the horrendous terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001, Putin sought to become the main guarantor of ethnic and religious peace in Russia. Under these changing circumstances, Shaimiev started to express his concerns about *Islamophobia* in the Russian Federation, which could provoke a clash between Christians and Muslims. According to Shaimiev, the majority of Tatarstan's residents practise the most tolerant forms of Islam, which is also known as *Jadidism*.¹⁴⁸ He also pointed out that Tatarstan's law on 'Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations' is based on the secular principle of separating the state from religion and seeks to promote freedom of conscience and tolerance among religious associations.¹⁴⁹ Relying on these arguments, Shaimiev asks the federal government to give the Republic the opportunity to develop along its own path. This shows that Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership is able to adapt its politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism pragmatically to the changing political conditions.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the experience of Tatarstan in the Russian Federation between 1992 and 1999 demonstrates the difficulties of establishing a working democratic federalism in Russia where both the federal and regional leaders are mainly concerned with their self-interest rather than the principles of federalism. Moreover, Russia's post-Soviet crisis of centre-periphery relations prevents any kind of Russian and non-Russian national identity, be it civic or ethnic, from fully developing. In fact, post-Soviet Russia has held together, to a great measure, precisely because the federal institutions and ideologies, be it liberalism or nationalism, have been weak. This weakness convinced the regional leaders that it is beneficial for them to settle their differences with Moscow in return for 'special

¹⁴⁷ Igor M. Kliamkin and Viktor V. Lapkin, 'Russkii vopros v Rossii', *Politicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.6, no.5, 1995, p.87.

¹⁴⁸ Julie A. Corwin, 'Is "Islamophobia" Spreading in the Regions?', *RFE/RL Russian Federation Report*, vol.3, no.31, 7 November 2001.

¹⁴⁹ *Zakon Respubliki Tatarstan o svobode sovesti i o religioznykh organizatsiakh*, Kazan: Iman, 1999.

concessions'. However, the existence of conflicting rules and the lack of the criteria for dispute resolution between the centre and the regions challenge the viability of the Russian Federation.

It could be argued that the El'tsin regime was mainly challenged by pragmatic regional elites especially in the rich regions rather than Russian and non-Russian separatist ethnic nationalist forces. These elites sought to increase their political autonomy and to defend their local economic interests from what they described as 'exploitation by the centre'.¹⁵⁰ In reality, however, El'tsin's federal policies often involved nothing more than seeking to collect taxes from the rich regions in order to boost the image of his regime through redistributing some wealth to the poorer areas of the federation.

In comparative terms, the Russian Federation differs significantly from democratic federations in the West. In fact, unlike democratic federations, Russian-style federalism, which is not wholly accountable to the masses, lacks a consistent, credible and financially sensible line of authority between the centre and the regions. In general, the centre-periphery relations in the Russian Federation are governed by political expediency. The inability of the federal authorities to check the power of wealthy clients and the regional elites has harmed the institutionalisation of democracy throughout Russia. El'tsin empowered regional elites through the Federation Council because he mainly sought to elicit support for the legitimacy of his policies in light of his precarious social support. A popular President, like Vladimir Putin, could reinforce some of the centralising 'federal' norms since such a leader may not need to make such concessions to increase his popularity.

The weakness of the federal centre in the Russian Federation in general and the fragile nature of the arrangements between Moscow and Tatarstan in particular put the stability of intergovernmental relations between Moscow and Kazan and interethnic relations between Russians and Tatars in question. At the intergovernmental level, the differing views of Moscow and Kazan on federal reform could lead to legal and institutional tensions. Legally, Moscow seeks to bring all laws of Tatarstan into line with the Russian

¹⁵⁰ Cameron Ross, 'Federalism and Regional Politics', in *Russia after the Cold War*, eds. Mike Bowker and Cameron Ross, London: Longman, 1999, p.85.

Constitution, which is highly anti-federalist in its approach towards the republics. Institutionally, the federal leadership under El'tsin has significantly succeeded in reducing the level of centre-periphery conflict by granting exceptional autonomy to Tatarstan. This served to condone the Tatarisation of the governing positions of Tatarstan. That is why Moscow's attempts at transforming Tatarstan into an ordinary subject of the Russian Federation could destabilise the intergovernmental relations by provoking the protests of the Tatar elites. From this point of view, intergovernmental relations between Tatarstan and Moscow look like a zero-sum game, in which gains of one side are perceived by the other side as something that threatens its vision of sustainable federal relationship.

Concerning the stability of interethnic relations between Russians and Tatars, this chapter identified that pragmatic forms of Russian and non-Russian nationalisms rather than their civic or ethnic forms prevail in the Russian Federation. Moreover, the underdevelopment of Russia's civil society that might have led to ethnic competitive mobilisation, rather than the 'civic' leaderships of Tatarstan or Russia, has been the key to a relatively peaceful 'federalisation' of Russia. Concerning the pragmatic politics of nationalism in Tatarstan, religious polarisation is something that needs to be avoided for the stability of interethnic relations between Russians and Tatars. The secular conception of Islam, which is known as Tatar *Jadidism* or Euro-Islam as some of my interviewees called it, could serve to improve the inter-confessional relations between Muslim and non-Muslim Tatars and other peoples in Tatarstan.

In the concluding chapter, I will bring together the conclusions of each chapter to discuss the competing explanations of the politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism in the post-Soviet era.

Conclusion

This thesis intended to examine how Tatarstan's leadership has succeeded in maintaining political power and gaining economic wealth without provoking a backlash either from Moscow or from the local Russian population between 1992 and 1999. The thesis also aimed to explore how stable the authority of Tatarstan's leadership is over the Republican population and the arrangements of Tatarstan's leadership are with Moscow. In particular, the aim was to examine the validity of the commonly held hypotheses that the type of nationalism promoted by Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership could be characterised as a civic or an ethnic form of nationalism. Although both Russian and Tatar leaderships depicted themselves as civic nationalists and labelled their opponents as ethnic nationalists, the evidence provided in this research work demonstrates that during the period under examination, Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership under Mintimer Shaimiev has promoted a Tatar version of *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* both within Tatarstan and in Tatarstan's relations with Moscow through employing ethnic and civic elements selectively to maximise its political power and economic wealth. This *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* asserts that granting national autonomy for the Tatars was the only formula for securing regional stability against ethnic nationalisms of the Tatars and the Russians in Tatarstan and the adverse regional effects of the federal policies.

The present work clearly demonstrates that both civic and ethnic Tatar nationalism arguments are not warranted in the light of the evidence provided. This stems from the mistaken assessment of the cases of nationalism in Russia against an idealised view of 'civic nationalism'. In the Russian context, generally, one ethnic group controls the state, but labels this as 'civic' nationalism that is confronted by ethnic nationalists.¹ This view, however, discriminates against the marginalized versions of nationalism in Tatarstan and Russia, which may not necessarily be less democratic than the dominant version of nationalism.

It is remarkable that the version of Tatar nationalism promoted by Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership succeeded in accommodating itself with Russian federalism, which has a long tradition of centralised authoritarian rule, and suppressed non-Russian nationalisms to maintain its territorial integrity. It is also puzzling that the sudden end of the Soviet empire, the subsequent political vacuum and weak institutional capacity have not resulted in the rise of Tatar or Russian ethnic nationalism in Tatarstan. The success of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership in promoting its own version of *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* explains partly the relatively peaceful redefinition of the intergovernmental relations between Moscow and Tatarstan as well as the interethnic relations between the Tatars and the Russians in the Republic. This conclusion supports Dominic Lieven's following observation:

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia's path has led through impoverishment, uncertainty and bloodshed. By the standards of other collapsing empires, however, history thus far has been extremely kind.²

Thus, it could be argued that although Tatarstan's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* has not contributed to the creation of a democratic and efficient state system both at the federal level and at the level of Tatarstan, it has not resulted in intergovernmental disorder or interethnic violence. Yet, the post-communist transition in Tatarstan, in specific, and in the Russian Federation, in general, encounter problems caused by Russia's Tsarist and Soviet authoritarian heritage and the specific transition strategies adopted by the elites in the post-Soviet era.

The evidence provided in Chapter One shows that the historical formation of the Tatar elites has considerably influenced the post-Soviet leadership of Tatarstan. The Tatar elites originated from the ruling elites of the Bulgar State, the Golden Horde and the Kazan Khanate. Ivan IV's capture of the Kazan Khanate on 15 October 1552 marked the loss of Tatar statehood tradition. From this point onwards, Moscow tried to gain the allegiance of the Tatar nobility through granting privileges to compliant Tatar elites and through purging the non-compliant ones. Chapter One discerned that when

¹ Rogers Brubaker, 'Myths and Misconceptions in the Study of Nationalism', in *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*, ed. John Hall, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp.298-301.

Moscow was strong, the co-opted Tatar elites were submissive and when Moscow was weak, they sought to enlarge their autonomy. Their method of reviving Tatar culture has been one of demanding institutional reform rather than independence. In fact, the reformist atmosphere under Catherine II and in the aftermath of the 1905 revolution led to calls for equal treatment for the Tatars, rather than to a fully-fledged independence-minded Tatar nationalist movement.

During the Soviet period, the Bolsheviks instituted an imperial rule over the Tatars through creating the TASSR within the RSFSR. Apart from subordinating the Republic to the Russian centre in Moscow, the Soviet centre in Moscow established its control over the TASSR through the CPSU's party discipline. In order to enlarge their scope of autonomy from Moscow, the Tatar elites adopted 'national communism', which refers to a national route towards the construction of communism. Under the Soviet rule, 'national communism' was seen as the only way to ensure popular participation. Nevertheless, Moscow succeeded in controlling Tatar national communism through purges during the 1930s and through the clientalistic co-optation of Tatarstan's leaders during the 1970s. The main flaw in the strategies of Tatar national communists lay in the fact that their success required the survival of the USSR, albeit in a reformed form. Therefore, the disintegration of the Soviet Union eliminated the remaining possibilities, if any, for the success of this strategy.

The analysis in Chapter Two demonstrated that Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership succeeded in achieving its political survival through eliminating the room left for democratic change in Tatarstan. In the post-Soviet period, Tatarstan's leadership faced uncertain political conditions emanating from Moscow's policies of post-Soviet 'transition' and the activism of local nationalist movements. In this context, Tatarstan's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalist* elites viewed nationality, which was the simplest form of identity that had been preserved in totalitarian Soviet society, as an 'instrument' for acquiring and keeping political power. Tatarstan's leadership has largely succeeded in getting rid of its opponents both in Moscow and in Tatarstan through turning the discontent of the people toward the sources of regional instability,

² Dominic Lieven, 'The Russian Empire and the Soviet Union as Imperial Polities', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol.30, no.4, 1995, pp.628-629.

with which Tatarstan's leadership identified their opponents. Their strategy involved the manipulation of interethnic conflicts in Tatarstan in such a way that only they could guarantee interethnic compromise and regional stability.

Contrary to the claims concerning the nature of Shaimiev's version of Tatar nationalism, the evidence provided in Chapter Two fails to support the arguments that Tatarstan's leadership promoted a civic or ethnic form of Tatar nationalism. Shaimiev's idea of Tatar nationalism is not civic because, in his conception, nationality is not identical to citizenship. A civic type of nationalism is not likely to develop in Tatarstan since Shaimiev's version of Tatar nationalism does not appeal to and serve the interests of wide sectors of the population and the emerging influential groups in Tatarstan. Shaimiev's type of Tatar nationalism, which serves the interests of the Republican leadership intent on preserving its status, cannot be considered as a version of Tatar ethnic nationalism, since it does not justify itself through the exclusive claims of the Tatar nation bound together by common culture and history. It justifies itself through a discourse of multinationalism in a manner that is very similar to the Soviet-era discourse of the 'friendship of nations' (*druzhba narodov*). In fact, Shaimiev's clientelistic policy of co-opting moderate politicians in the Republic has weakened both the Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalist movements considerably due to its divisive effects on these movements.

Chapter Two demonstrated that Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* conforms to John Breuilly's definition of nationalism in that it represents a political movement seeking or exercising state power and justifying such action with the following assumptions: First, there exists a Tatar nation with an explicit and peculiar character. Second, the interests and values of the Tatar nation take priority over all other interests and values; otherwise regional stability might be endangered. Finally, the Tatar nation must be as independent as possible, which involved, in Shaimiev's case, the attainment of political sovereignty.

Having characterised Shaimiev's discourse as a form of nationalism, it should be noted that the Tatar members of Tatarstan's post-Soviet leadership have been nationalists of convenience rather than of conviction. They pragmatically combined

the civic and ethnic types of nationalism in order to promote their own specific elite interests. Through playing the nationalists of different types against each other, Tatarstan's leadership claimed that it is only their version of nationalism that could ensure the stability of Tatarstan in the face of the destabilising forms of nationalism.

As a former communist politician, Mintimer Shaimiev utilised his considerable manoeuvring skills to accommodate and pacify the nationalist forces in Tatarstan. Chapter Two explored Shaimiev's nation-building policies through examining ethnic privileges in legal documents and nation-building policies in the fields of language, education, science, mass media and religion. Tatarstan's language policies expanded the job opportunities for Tatar-language teachers, and increased the proportion of Tatars within the intelligentsia in Tatarstan. Moreover, the constitution required the President of Tatarstan to know both Tatar and Russian, virtually ensuring that only Tatars would hold that office in the foreseeable future (article 108). As a consequence of these nation-building policies, Tatarstan's leadership became much more Tatar-dominated than it had ever been. It was also clearly shown in Chapter Two that Tatars are over-represented in legislative and executive bodies of Tatarstan.

Another conclusion that is supported by this research is that Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism has led to widespread corruption and nepotism in Tatarstan. Shaimiev has filled the strategic positions in the Republic with people who are loyal to himself personally. In this atmosphere, Shaimiev's close friends succeeded in controlling Tatarstan's post-Soviet wealth. The evidence presented in Chapter Two demonstrates that there has been a systematic process of Tatarisation of Tatarstan's political, economic and cultural elites in the post-Soviet era. Shaimiev paid a special attention to getting the Republican oil industry under his control. Although it is very difficult to produce a convincing evidence of personal corruption involving Shaimiev due to the closed nature of Shaimiev's own business relations, the fact that his two sons Airat and Radik Shaimiev have become very rich because of their positions in the oil industry shows that at least some members of his family benefit from the political influence of Mintimer Shaimiev in the Republic. Besides, just like the other parts of the Russian Federation, there has not yet been a systematic drive of the Republican leadership to root out corruption in Tatarstan.

It is also concluded that due to the weakness of democratic institutions in Tatarstan, the masses in the Republic do not play an active political role other than voting in elections. The absence of any Russian backlash to the massive process of Tatarisation in post-Soviet Tatarstan can be explained by looking at the patronage networks and elections without choices in the Republic. These two factors prevented Moscow and the local opposition groups in Tatarstan from producing a viable alternative to Shaimiev's regime. Empowered by the electoral system, Tatarstan's leadership has generally been able to fix elections in accordance with its own calculations. In fact, the election of candidates outside Shaimiev's patronage networks is very unlikely. Consequently, Shaimiev emerges as a politician who rule with a 'strong hand' in order to maintain social peace and order. Politics of nationalism similar to those in Tatarstan could be observed also in the non-Russian republics of Bashkortostan and Chuvashiia and the independent state of Kazakhstan.

The thesis has identified that the ability of the post-Soviet leadership of Tatarstan to promote its *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* depends on the weaknesses of the federal centre in Moscow and the capacity of Tatarstan's leadership to keep ethnic nationalist movements in Tatarstan under its control. The existence of these two conditions have largely enabled Tatarstan's leadership to get what it wanted in the post-Soviet era. In order to illuminate the bases of Shaimiev's pragmatic politics of Tatar nationalism, Chapter Three explored the relative strengths and weaknesses of Moscow vis-à-vis Tatarstan, and Chapter Four examined the level of social support for the ethnic nationalist forces in Tatarstan.

The evidence provided in Chapter Three indicates that Tatarstan's leadership has used Tatar nationalism pragmatically in its relations with Moscow. Tatarstan, which claimed its own state sovereignty in 1990 and refused to sign the Federation Treaty of 1992, challenged the authority of Moscow over Tatarstan by adopting its own constitution in 1992 as the basis of legislation. Furthermore, according to the results of the referendum on the status of Tatarstan, which took place on 21 March 1992, 61.4 percent of the voters approved that Tatarstan is a 'sovereign state, the subject of international law, forming its relations with the Russian Federation, other Republics

and states on the basis of equal agreements'.³ However, despite these achievements, Tatarstan's leadership became worried about the increasingly nationalistic climate of Russian politics after the 1993 Russian constitutional referendum and parliamentary elections, because the rise of Russian nationalism could have jeopardised the entire prospect for a power-sharing treaty with Moscow granting privileges to Tatarstan's leadership. Therefore, Shaimiev found it necessary to make concessions to Moscow. After all, the Tatar ethnic nationalist movement had already lost its popularity, and Tatarstan's economy was in a deep crisis.

This explains why the Power-Sharing Treaty between Moscow and Tatarstan in February 1994 produced mixed results for Tatarstan's leadership. In this treaty, Tatarstan was not referred to as 'sovereign', but rather as 'a state united with the Russian Federation'. Moreover, the treaty, which guarantees 'the preservation of the territorial integrity of Russia', declined to recognise Tatarstan as a 'subject' of international law. Accordingly, Tatarstan could not conclude treaties with foreign states, but only agreements with the approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Although Tatarstan is to have its own citizenship, questions of citizenship are to be regulated jointly with Moscow. Certain provisions of the treaty and agreements preserve an appearance of sovereignty, but with little substantive content. For instance, Tatarstan's customs service is considered as a branch of the Russian customs service, and quotas for Tatarstan's oil exports are similarly set by the Ministry of Fuel and Energy in Moscow. One area in which Tatarstan received a good deal was that of property and finances. According to the Treaty, Tatarstan gained the right to levy and collect its own taxes and to keep the proceeds of excise duties on oil, gas and liquor. With the exception of military enterprises and railroads, Tatarstan became the owner of all productive assets and natural resources on its own territory. This enabled Tatarstan to carry out privatisation in its own way to the benefit of the Republican leadership, and to keep out the Russian oligarchs.

It was also concluded in Chapter Three that Moscow's treaties with various non-Russian and Russian regions such as Bashkortostan, Sakha and Sverdlovsk, just like the treaty with Tatarstan, granted special concessions to them in return for their

³ *Moscow News*, 25 March 1992.

mobilisation of local support for El'tsin. On the other hand, Moscow's Treaty with Tatarstan differs significantly from its treaties with these regions in the level of its self-government.

The evidence provided in Chapter Three shows that Tatarstan's pragmatic position was dictated mainly by the fact that Tatarstan's economy depends on the existence of close ties both with Russia and with nearly all the other states of the former Soviet Union. Tatarstan's rich oil reserves and industrial base make the Republic economically powerful. The fact that Tatarstan is situated at the crossroads of Russian communications also attaches economic and political importance to the Republic. At the same time, apart from the enclave position of Tatarstan, the existence of a Tatar diaspora in the post-Soviet states and mainly in the Russian Federation (68 percent of the Tatars) necessitates a pragmatic orientation towards the Russian Federation.

In the post-Treaty period, Tatarstan's strategy in its relations with Moscow relied on giving political support to El'tsin in return for gaining greater autonomy since Tatarstan's leadership has a considerable influence over the Republican electorate. In addition, Shaimiev's *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* benefited from El'tsin's chronic poor health and the frequent government reshuffles in Moscow. Russia's post-Soviet economic problems also made it difficult for the Kremlin to define and enforce a coherent policy toward Tatarstan. In this context, the informal and personal relations between El'tsin and Shaimiev have influenced Tatarstan's relations with Moscow considerably.

In order to describe how the people in Tatarstan are responding to Shaimiev's politics of Tatar nationalism, Chapter Four focused on the society and culture in Tatarstan. The Chapter discerned that Tatar nationalist movements developed along a very different path than that taken by the aggressive nationalist movements in the former Soviet republics, except for the ones in Belarus and the Central Asian republics. Similarly, the passivity of the ethnic Russians in Tatarstan could be compared to the similar attitudes of the Russian Diaspora in the post-Soviet states. Both Tatar and Russian ethnic nationalists lack the following factors which are vital for the success of any social movement: First, an effective organisation that links leadership with the

masses; second, adequate human and financial resources; third, a common interest defined through a discourse of nationalism; and last, the existence of a political opportunity, such as the crisis of the federal state, which could be used to mobilize support and to build coalition with other movements.

The analysis in Chapter Four demonstrates that it was the success of Tatar elites in addressing problems in the areas of language, education and culture that deprived ethnic nationalists of the cultural resources necessary for mobilising the masses around nationalist objectives. This shows the divisive impacts of the nation-building policies of Tatarstan's leadership on Tatar ethnic nationalists. Moreover, the internal divisions within the Tatar ethnic nationalist movement played an important role in their post-Soviet weakness. Both Ittifak and VTOTs represented the main rival groups in the Tatar ethnic nationalist movement. Their struggle for the leadership of Tatar nationalism diluted the movement, while creating further internal divisions within their own organisations. The moderate wing, represented by the VTOTs, focuses on the conditions of a broad-based political consensus among various Tatar nationalists, whereas the radical wing represented by the Ittifak party employs the rhetoric of Islamic fundamentalism.

Chapter Four's argument that there is a weak social support for ethnic nationalism in Tatarstan was warranted by several opinion polls. For example, according to the sociological survey of the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, there was a very low level of support for ethnic nationalism in 1993. According to the results of this survey, 52 percent of the Tatars advocated only a Tatarstani identity, 34 percent claimed to have both Tatarstani and Russian identities, and 3 percent had only Russian identity with a further 11 percent who declined to answer. In contrast to the Tatars, 15 percent of the Russians claimed only a Tatarstani identity, 49 percent had both Tatarstani and Russian identities, and 28 percent only felt Russian with a further 8 percent who preferred not to answer this question.⁴

⁴ Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, London: Sage, 1997, p.262.

In Chapter Four, it was shown that there is a limited potential for the mobilisation of ethnic differences in Tatarstan given the absence of institutions that could channel ethnic differences into a nationalist movement. In this sense, the factors impeding the growth of Tatar ethnic nationalism include the self/other perceptions of the Tatars and the Russians, the popularity of religious tolerance, bilingualism, mixed marriages and cosmopolitan urban culture. Moreover, the weaknesses of the market economy and civil society deprive the Tatar and the Russian ethnic nationalists of the instruments for mobilising the masses in Tatarstan. Yet, Tatarstan's society and culture demonstrate unique characteristics, since the presence of these same factors did not prevent ethnic struggles elsewhere in the post-Communist space. For example, high rates of intermarriage did not keep the Croats, Serbs and Bosnians from fighting a brutal interethnic war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Relying on the findings of the previous chapters, the analysis in Chapter Five demonstrates that the 'Tatarstan model' of Russian federalism signifies neither the formation of democratic federalism in Russia by the 'civic' leadership of Tatarstan nor the obstruction of a 'civic' Russian national identity by the 'ethnic nationalist' leadership of Tatarstan. Instead, this model constitutes a pragmatic solution to Russia's post-Soviet crisis of centre-periphery relations, which prevented any kind of Russian and non-Russian national identity, be it civic or ethnic, from fully developing. Indeed, the 'Tatarstan model' of Russian federalism is an example of the post-Soviet politics of survival in Russia, which is based on a formal constitutional order in which rent-seeking federal and local leaders hold real power on the ground. Although the federal leadership has been too weak to enforce federal laws and collect federal taxes in the regions, it was able to gain the support of regional leaders with a capacity to mobilise their local masses for fixing elections peacefully in return for asymmetrical concessions to these leaders.

In this sense, the politics of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism reflect the weakness of post-Soviet Russian federalism, and could explain what went wrong in the implementation of democratic federalism in Russia. As Damir Iskhakov, an ethnologist in Tatarstan's Institute of History, argues, the pragmatic nature of this model creates both advantages and disadvantages for the Tatar ethnic nationalists. The

‘Tatarstan model’ enhances the existing imperial relationship between Moscow and the Tatars through broadening the autonomy of Tatarstan. Nevertheless, this model cannot satisfy the Tatar ethnic nationalists since the state organs of Tatarstan and the Russian Federation created it. Because of its elite-centric focus, the model ignored the promotion of civil society in Tatarstan, which is essential for the development of Tatar ethnic nationalism.⁵ Although Tatarstan’s nomenklatura leadership benefited from its stabilising role against the ‘threat’ of ethnic nationalism in the short term, Moscow’s construction of a highly statist, non-competitive and non-transparent federal system modelled on the power-sharing treaty with Tatarstan works against Tatarstan’s long-term interests since it limits the Republic’s manoeuvring space vis-à-vis Moscow.

Chapter Five also concluded that unlike the United States, Canada, Germany, Spain and Belgium, the Russian Federation cannot be considered a fully democratic federation in comparative terms since only a democratic system can build a relatively stable federal system. In fact, only constitutional democracies can provide credible guarantees and the institutionally embedded mechanisms that help ensure that the law-making prerogatives of the sub-units will be respected. Although Moscow tolerates the regional diversity and the regional asymmetries of socio-economic development and of legal status, the Russian Federation’s reluctance to give a stable legal recognition to these asymmetries makes it less democratic. Moreover, in less democratic federations, such as the Russian Federation, the centre and the regions share all powers, whereas in democratic federations, some powers are reserved either to the centre or to the regions.

The analysis in Chapter Five shows that Russian federal practices are not governed only by formal rules, but more importantly also by informal rules. The precedence of the rule by men over the rule by law hinders the development of democratic federalism in Russia where federal policies are shaped mainly by the executive branches of the federal centre and the regions. The poor level coordination with other institutions of the state undermines the effectiveness of these federal policies. Consequently, the outcome of federal relations in Russia depends on personal

⁵ Damir M. Iskhakov, ‘Model’ Tatarstana: Za i protiv’, in *Tatarskaia natsiia: Proshloe, nastoiashche, budushchee*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1997, pp.11-15.

negotiations between regional leaders and the President. In such a context, it is highly difficult to institute the separation of powers between the president and the parliament, a party system, the rule of law and a civil society that are the traditional components of democratic federalism.

Russian federalism under the El'tsin regime could be characterised by asymmetrical federalism, which reflects Russia's ethnic heterogeneity and 'historical compromises' with its minorities. Thus, the asymmetrical nature of the Russian Federation serves to strengthen Russia's territorial integrity. This, however, does not mean that asymmetrical federalism has not caused problems for the development of democratic federalism in Russia. In fact, Russia's post-Soviet experience has been highly anarchic as both the federal and regional elites sought to enrich themselves without being accountable to the masses. One could even make a historical analogy between Tatarstan's experience in the Russian Federation and the feudal system. However, unlike feudalism, a formal system of contractual legal relations and mutual obligations backed by religion and culture is missing in Russia.⁶ Thus, it can be said that post-Soviet federal problems are not restorations of familiar Tsarist patterns but rather direct responses to the new initiatives produced by post-Soviet conditions. In this sense, the politics of Russian federalism is profoundly anti-institutional since a tightly-knit group of individuals continue to mould and remould the institutional design according to their will.

The institutional problems of Russian federalism seem to be produced by the decisions of self-serving federal and regional leaders in a context characterised by a high level of uncertainty. Russia's asymmetrical federal system has created a path to power for the regional leaders that does not require the mobilization of local ethnic nationalism. Besides, the federal centre's concessions to individual regional leaders have undermined the legitimacy of federal law and the federal constitution, weakened the protection of civil rights and undercut any potential economic benefits that federalism might be expected to deliver. Even more significantly, the desire to defend

⁶ Vladimir Shlapentokh, 'Early Feudalism - The Best Parallel for Contemporary Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.48 no.3, 1996, pp.394-397.

these asymmetrical deals has contributed to the development of national institutions like the parliament, electoral system and treasury in the regions.

The final conclusion of Chapter Five is that Russian federalism is unstable due to the fragile nature of the intergovernmental and interethnic relations in the Russian Federation. Given the shaky nature of the federal arrangements between Moscow and Tatarstan, the stability of intergovernmental relations could easily be endangered by the diverging views of Moscow and Kazan on federal reforms. While Moscow's proposals for federal reform seek to strengthen the centripetal dynamics, Tatarstan's proposals of federal reform tend to promote centrifugal dynamics in the Russian Federation. In this respect, the stability of the Russian Federation depends not on how much power the centre holds vis-à-vis the regions, but on its ability to live with regional diversity and to nurture a necessarily slow, ground-up evolution of formal and informal institutions that mediate centre–periphery grievances and disputes.

Vladimir Putin's centralising federal reforms that were adopted in 2000 could have a destabilising impact on the development of Russian federalism as well as the relations between Moscow and Tatarstan. In creating a 'stronger Russian state', Putin undermines the Russian-Tatarstan accommodation achieved under El'tsin because the stability of Tatarstan's relations with Moscow requires the continuity of Tatarstan's special privileges. From this point of view, the strengthening of the Russian state under Putin has been accompanied by a weakening of Russian federalism, since the state that is to be strengthened does not seem to be in the service of regional interests, including those of Tatarstan's leadership. It should be noted that Moscow has not yet displayed a capacity to dictate its will fully over the regions. This shows that there are several interesting topics for the researchers of Tatar nationalism and Russian federalism under Putin. The researchers could explore the strengths and the weaknesses of the Shaimiev regime and Tatar nationalism in coping with Putin's centralising federal reforms.

In this context, the stability of interethnic relations constitutes a key concern of the Russian federal leadership since Russian federalism has institutionalised nationalism through its ethno-federal structure. Thus, the main challenge facing the Russian

Federation in regulating interethnic relations stems from the necessity of impeding the growth of Russian as well as non-Russian ethnic nationalist movements. In this respect, it should be stated that despite the existence of ethnic nationalists, there is a strong basis for interethnic peace in Tatarstan, which is ensured by the reformist understanding of Islam among the Tatars, *Jadidism*. Thanks mainly to this secular conception of Islam, there has not been any serious religious conflict between the Tatars and the Russians in the post-Soviet period. This argument conveys a very important message against religious fanaticism, which has become a very dangerous threat to international stability as well as to the stability of Russia's interethnic relations especially after the horrendous terrorist acts in the United States on 11 September 2001. To the dismay of the radical fundamentalist groups, the popularity of *Jadidism* in Tatarstan show that cultural and religious differences may not necessarily lead to fanaticism, but to a multicultural world if the religious identities undergo a serious process of secularisation.

The analysis developed in this thesis helps us combine what have been relatively segmented stories about the politics of post-Soviet nationalism. Instead of trying to label the existing forms of post-Soviet nationalism as 'civic' or 'ethnic', it is more fruitful to focus on the pragmatic 'uses' of these nationalisms, which produce novel consequences for the organisation of political landscape in post-Soviet space. Moreover, this study carries a cautionary note for the students of post-communist federalism in demonstrating how post-Soviet Russian federalism differs from the Western notions of democratic federalism. In fact, the empirical reality shows that the federal and regional politicians in Russia have been guided mainly by pragmatism rather than democratic principles. The overall conclusion of this thesis can be drawn that Tatarstan's leadership has managed to accommodate its version of Tatar *pragmatic nomenklatura nationalism* with post-Soviet Russian federalism. Nevertheless, it should be added that Shaimiev's pragmatic policies resulted in the growth of Tatar nationalism at the intergovernmental level, if not at the interethnic level, even though this was not the intended outcome.

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Note on Sources

The sources used in this thesis are categorised into primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include the following sub-categories: documents; census and election results, opinion polls and reports; memoirs, testaments and newspaper articles; newspapers consulted and interviews with participants. My interviews with specialists are listed at the end of the section for secondary sources.

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Appendices

Appendix I. The Full Texts of the Key Documents on the Status of Tatarstan in the Russian Federation

1.1. Declaration on the State Sovereignty of the Republic of Tatarstan

The Supreme Soviet of the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic,

- realising the historical responsibility for the fortunes of multinational peoples;
- expressing respect for the sovereign rights of all peoples, inhabiting the Russian Federation and the USSR;
- realising the incapability of the status of Autonomous Republic, and the interests of the future political, economic, social and spiritual development of the multinational peoples;
- ensuring the inherent rights of Tatars, and of the whole population of the Republic to self-determination;

-aiming at the creation of a legal democratic state,

1. Proclaims the Tatar state sovereignty, and reforms the Autonomous Republic into the Tatar Soviet Socialist Republic (The Tatar SSR) - The Republic of Tatarstan.

2. The land, its natural resources and other resources on the territory of the Tatar SSR shall be the exclusive property of the Tatar people.

3. Irrespective of nationality, social origin, belief, political convictions and other differences, the Tatar SSR shall guarantee all the citizens of the Republic equal rights and freedoms. Russian and Tatar shall be the state languages and shall be equal in the Tatar SSR, the maintenance and development of languages of other nationalities shall be ensured.

4. The official state name in the Constitution, in other legal acts and in state activity shall be 'The Tatar Soviet Socialist Republic' ('The Tatar SSR' or 'The Republic of Tatarstan'). The Republic's Supreme body of power shall be named 'The Supreme Soviet of the Tatar SSR' and its enacting acts shall be named: the acts of the Supreme Soviet of the Tatar SSR.

5. The present declaration shall be the basis for Tatar Constitution, for Tatar legislation, for participation of the Tatar SSR in drafting and signing the Union Treaty, for agreements with the RSFSR and other republics. It also shall be the basis for the presentation of the most important questions of state formation of the Tatar SSR, its relations with the USSR, with the RSFSR and other republics for the consideration of its people. The Constitution and the acts of the Tatar SSR shall be supreme on the territory of the Tatar SSR.

6. Before the adoption of new Constitution of the Tatar SSR, other laws and regulations of the Tatar SSR, acting laws of the Tatar SSR, of the Russian Federation and the USSR remain valid on the territory of the Tatar SSR, unless they contradict the Declaration on the state sovereignty of the Tatar SSR.

The present Declaration shall come into force from the date of its adoption.

Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Tatar Soviet Socialist Republic
Kazan, 30 August 1990

Source: 'Deklaratsiia o gosudarstvennom suverenitete TSSR', in *Belaia kniga Tatarstana. Put' k suverenitetu 1990-1995 (Sbornik dokumentov)*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1995, p.5.

1.2. The Power-Sharing Treaty between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan ‘On Delimitation of Jurisdictional Subjects and Mutual Delegation of Authority between the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan’

The plenipotentiaries of the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan:

empowered by the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan;

based on the universally recognised right of peoples to self-determination, and the principles of equality, voluntariness and free will;

guaranteeing the preservation of the territorial integrity and the unity of common economic space;

promoting the preservation and development of historical and national customs, cultures, languages;

being concerned about ensuring civil peace, international accord and security of peoples;

acknowledging the priority of the basic human rights and freedoms regardless of nationality, religion, location of habitation and other differences;

taking into account the fact that the Republic of Tatarstan, as a state that is united with the Russian Federation according to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan and the Treaty on the Delimitation of Jurisdictional Authority and the Mutual Delegation of Powers between the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan, and participates in international and foreign economic relations, have agreed to the following:

Article I

Delimitation of Jurisdictional Subjects and Mutual Delegation of Authority between the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan shall be governed by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan and the present Treaty.

Article II

The Republic of Tatarstan has its own Constitution and Legislation.

The State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan shall execute the authority of state power and shall:

- 1) guarantee the protection of human and civil rights and freedoms;
- 2) form the republican budget, and define and impose the republican taxes;
- 3) decide the issues concerning jurisprudence and notary public;
- 4) implement the legal regulation of administrative, family and housing relations as well as relations in the area of environmental protection and use of natural resources;
- 5) grant amnesty to individuals convicted by the courts of the Republic of Tatarstan;
- 6) decide the issues concerning the possession, use and disposal of land, mineral wealth, water, timber and other natural resources as well as state enterprises, organizations, and other movable and immovable state property, located on the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan,

which is the exclusive property of the people of Tatarstan except for units of federal property. Delimitation of the state property shall be governed by a separate Agreement;

7) establish the system of State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan as well as their organizational structure and activity;

8) decide the issues of the republican citizenship;

9) establish the order for alternative civil service on the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan for citizens having the right to substitute their service in the armed forces in accordance with the federal law;

10) establish and maintain relations, conclude treaties and agreements with the republics, territories, regions, autonomous districts and regions, and the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg of the Russian Federation which shall not contradict the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan, the present Treaty and other agreements between the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan;

11) participate in international affairs, shall establish relations with foreign states and conclude treaties, which shall not contradict the Constitution and international obligations of the Russian Federation, the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan and the present Treaty, shall participate in the activity of corresponding international organizations;

12) create a National Bank pursuant to a separate agreement;

13) conduct foreign economic activity independently. The delimitation of authorities in the field of foreign economic activity shall be settled by a special agreement;

14) decide on the order established by a separate agreement, the questions of conversion for enterprises which are in the possession of the Republic of Tatarstan;

15) establish the state awards and honorary titles of the Republic of Tatarstan.

Article III

The State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan jointly are authorized to:

1) guarantee the civil rights and freedoms of persons and citizens, the rights of national minorities;

2) protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity;

3) organize mobilization of the national economy, direction of the design and production of armaments and military equipment on the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan; questions concerning the sale of armaments, ammunition, military equipment and other military property as well as the conversion of defence industry. The form and share of the Parties' participation shall be governed by a separate agreement;

4) settle the common and contradictory questions of citizenship;

5) coordinate the international and foreign economic relations;

6) coordinate pricing policy;

7) create funds for regional development;

8) pursue monetary policy;

9) manage the items of property of the Russian Federation or the Republic of Tatarstan, which may be transferred to the joint management according to interest based on voluntary and mutual consent. The forms and the order for common management of specific items shall be governed by a separate Agreement;

- 10) coordinate activity on the questions of geodesy, meteorology and calendar system;
- 11) create joint funds for the purpose of financing common programmes, elimination of the consequences of disasters and catastrophes on the basis of mutual agreements;
- 12) coordinate the management of common power system as well as highway, railway, pipeline, tubing, air and water transport, communications and information systems;
- 13) ensure an unobstructed and duty-free regime for movement and transportation of vehicles, cargoes and products by air, sea, river, railway and highway as well as through pipeline transport;
- 14) estimate the quality of environment conditions according to the international standards and promote the measures for its stabilization and rehabilitation; secure the ecology, coordinate the action concerning the use of land, water and other natural resources; prevent ecological disasters and settle questions on specially protected natural areas;
- 15) implement common policy in the social sphere: population employment patterns, migration processes and social protection, including social welfare;
- 16) coordinate activity on the issues of health care, family, maternity, paternity, childhood, education, science, culture, physical education and sport; the preparation of national specialists for schools, educational and cultural institutions, mass media and other institutions and organizations; shall provide pre-school institutions and educational institutions with native language literature; shall co-ordinate scientific research in the field of history, national cultures and their languages;
- 17) deal with problems of personnel for justice and police enforcement agencies;
- 18) settle litigation, arbitration and notary public questions;
- 19) coordinate the activity of police enforcement agencies, the cooperation of security services, the creation and use of programmes to combat crime;
- 20) establish common principles for organising the state bodies and local self-government;
- 21) establish administrative, administrative-legal, labour, family, housing, land, water, timber legislation, legislation on mineral wealth, on protection of the surrounding environment;
- 22) address the questions of common use of land, mineral wealth, water and other natural resources;
- 23) execute other authority established by mutual agreement.

Article IV

Within the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and its State Bodies are found:

- 1) the adoption and alteration of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws as well as control of their observance; the implementation of the federal system on the territory of the Russian Federation;
- 2) the regulation and protection of human and civil rights and freedoms; the questions of citizenship in the Russian Federation; the regulation and protection of the rights of national minorities;
- 3) the establishment of a system of federal legislative, executive and judicial power and the order of their organization and activity; formation of federal bodies of state authority;
- 4) the federal state property and its management;
- 5) the establishment of the basis of federal policy and federal programmes in the fields of state, economic, ecological, social, cultural and national development of the Russian Federation;

- 6) the establishment of the legal basis for a common market; finance, currency, credit, customs regulation, money supply, principals of general price policy; federal economic agencies, including federal banks;
- 7) the federal budget, federal taxes and duties, federal funds for regional development;
- 8) the federal power system, nuclear energy, fissionable materials; federal transport, communication pathways, information and communication systems, space activity;
- 9) foreign policy and international relations of the Russian Federation, international agreements of the Russian Federation; questions of war and peace;
- 10) foreign economic relations of the Russian Federation;
- 11) defence and security; the defence industry; the determination of the order of sale and purchase of armament, ammunition, military equipment and other military property; production of toxic substance, drugs and the order of their use;
- 12) the determination of the status and the defence of state borders, territorial waters, air space, the exclusive economic area and continental shelf of the Russian Federation;
- 13) the judicial system; the procurator's Office; penal legislation, criminal procedure and penal-executive legislation; amnesty and clemency; civil legislation and procedure and arbitration-procedural legislation;
- 14) federal law of conflicts;
- 15) the meteorological service, standards, standard meters, metric system, time calculation, geodesy, cartography, names of geographical places; formal statistics and book-keeping;
- 16) state awards and honorary titles of the Russian Federation;
- 17) Federal State Service.

Article V

Judicial documents, issued by the State Bodies, institutions and officials of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan within the limits of authority of these State Bodies, institutions and officials, shall be valid.

Article VI

The State Bodies of the Russian Federation as well as the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan shall have no rights to issue any legal act on issues which do not relate to their area of responsibility.

The State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan as well as the Federal State Bodies shall have the right to protest against the acts of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan where they infringe upon the present Treaty.

Disputes on the execution of authority in the sphere of common competence of the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan shall be settled in accordance with the procedure agreed to between the Parties.

Article VII

For the purpose of executing the present Treaty, the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan shall have the right to conclude additional agreements, create joint structures and commissions on an equal footing.

Article VIII

The State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan shall have plenipotentiary representatives in the cities of Moscow and Kazan.

Article IX

No unilateral cancellation, alteration or amendment of the present Treaty or its provisions shall become valid.

The Treaty shall become effective 7 days after its signing and shall be published for public dissemination.

The present Treaty is concluded on February 15, 1994 in the city of Moscow in two copies, each in Russian and Tatar, both texts having equal judicial force.

On behalf of the Russian Federation:

Boris N. El'tsin

President of the Russian Federation

Viktor S. Chernomyrdin

Prime Minister of the Russian Federation

On behalf of the Republic of Tatarstan:

Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev

President of the Republic of Tatarstan

Mukhammat G. Sabirov

Prime Minister of the Republic of Tatarstan

Moscow, 15 February 1994

Source: 'Dogovor Rossiiskoi Federatsii i Respubliki Tatarstan o razgranichenii predmetov vedeniia i vzaimnom delegirovanii polnomochii mezhdu organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Rossiiskoi Federatsii i organami gosudarstvennoi vlasti Respubliki Tatarstana', in *Belaia kniga Tatarstana. Put' k suverenitetu 1990-1995 (Sbornik dokumentov)*, ed. Rafael S. Khakimov, Kazan: II ANT, 1995, pp.86-92.

Appendix II. Keynote Policy Statements of Russian President Boris N. El'tsin and Tatarstan President Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev on Russian Federalism

2.1. The Text of Russian President Boris N. El'tsin's Annual Message to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation 'Federalism and Local Self-Government', Moscow, 16 February 1995.

Russian history has decreed that the state's sovereignty extends over a vast territory and covers numerous peoples. By virtue of the size of the territory and the huge diversity of living conditions - historical, national, economic, natural- Russia has two methods of preserving itself as a unified state. One is unitarism, rigorously centralised government. It was on this basis that Russia existed until recently. This method is based mainly on the command principle. The effectiveness of the authority depends here on the might of illegal coercive means. Our society has adopted a different path of preserving the state's unity - federalism, the decentralisation of government. This method is, naturally, based on law, including the strict regulation of the competence of the federal and regional authorities. It is a method of not simply preserving Russia's integrity, but also ensuring the effective protection of society and the citizens and the harmonious development of the spiritual, cultural, and economic links between all the components of the Russian state.

The majority of Russia's citizens today understand that the problem of Russia's sovereignty is firmly linked to the federalisation of the country, and that federalism is the surest path, not to undermining the integrity of the state, but to promoting its cohesion. It is federalism that offers an outlet for the territorial communities' desire for autonomy and free development.

The first steps toward the formation of true federalism, in particular the transfer of powers from the centre to the regions, were perceived by many as a sign of the state's weakness, an encroachment on its sovereignty, and even a threat to its territorial integrity. It must be admitted that there were some grounds for such fears. At first, there were politicians who built their careers specifically on separatist slogans and on the struggle against the federal authority. But federalism in Russia gained strength, and by last year it had become clear that the overt threat of separatism had been overcome. This is considerably to the credit of both the federal and the territorial authorities. They did not allow the situation to become really dangerous to Russia's integrity. With very rare exceptions, the question of any territories' seceding from Russia did not arise. We had sufficient statesmanlike wisdom and responsibility for this. Treaties between the Russian Federation organs of state power and the organs of power of Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Kabardino-Balkaria made it possible to raise the level of mutual understanding with those components of the Federation and to stabilise the political situation there.

The time has come to formulate and enshrine in legislation the criteria on the basis of which the federal organs of power can clarify constitutional relations with the Federation components. Here the constitutional principle of our Federation's structure must remain inviolate. The Federation components have enormous scope for total self-fulfilment within the framework of the Russian Constitution. It guarantees them the broadest powers to resolve their own internal problems. They retain all the rights of state power except those listed as

federal prerogatives. In order to reflect the peculiar characteristics of life in their own territories, they are entitled to create their own fundamental laws - charters and constitutions.

Nonetheless the granting to the Federation components of wide autonomy and the delimitation of spheres of jurisdiction and powers between the federal organs of power and the organs of power of individual Federation components do not entirely solve the problem of preserving the unity and integrity of the Russian state. It is necessary to improve regional policy. This is the most important area of federal policy, based on an integrated system of documents reflecting both the strategic national security interests of Russia as a unified federal state, and the developmental needs of the regions themselves, and - most important - the need of all the Federation components for co-ordinated co-operation with one another for the benefit of each individual territory and the country as a whole.

Experience shows that the interests of an individual territory by no means always coincide with the interests of the state as a whole, and are not infrequently in conflict with the interests of neighbouring territories. But despite these complexities and contradictions, last year it proved possible to make marked progress in the formulation of regional policy. This problem has been studied conceptually both in the presidential structures, and in the government, and in the Federal Assembly. It is now a matter of translating concepts into the language of concrete measures and programs. This work should be completed by the fall of this year, in order to provide for the appropriate measures in next year's budget.

Last year was the year of the birth of Russian budgetary federalism. Unified norms were formulated for the distribution of revenue from the main federal taxes between the federal and regional budgets, and a formula was defined for the expenditure of resources from the Fund for Financial Support for the Federation Components. As a result the budgetary autonomy and responsibility of the Federation components increased, and it was possible to a significant extent to relax the tension in inter-budgetary relations. In 1995 a new mechanism for budgetary relationships should be established, embracing all the Federation components. The granting of federal support funds to the territories should be substantiated to a greater degree.

Local self-government is an important mechanism for ensuring the country's unity. Developed local self-government can be one of the most reliable guarantees of the state's integrity. It is the cement that binds Russia's state integrity. The municipal authority is closer to the citizens and is engaged primarily in resolving their most urgent, day-to-day problems. It has a direct interest in a federal authority that is, legally speaking, strong, and capable of ensuring higher social standards in citizens' lives and clamping down on any arbitrariness by regional authorities.

The formation and development of local self-government has been talked about a lot, but much less has been done about it in practice. This situation must be rectified. It is not enough to adopt a law on the general principles of organisation of local self-government. It is vitally important to peg to the implementation of this law a system of measures ensuring the development of local self-government as a viable level of power, and at the same time as a form of people's self-organisation with the best long-term future.

Unfortunately, the draft federal program for state support for local self-government has spent more than a year passing from office to office for co-ordination. In 1995 the government must ratify this federal program. The rights and interests of local self-government must be taken into account in the process of the reform of budgetary, tax, and land relations. The objective necessity to organise the compilation of municipal statistics in the Russian Federation has become urgent. Without this, we cannot count on a realistic state policy on transforming local power on democratic principles.

Source: *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 17 February 1995.

2.2. The Text of Tatarstan President Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev's Keynote Address 'The Future of the Russian Federation: A Look [sic] from Tatarstan', Harvard University (USA), 6 October 1994.

Dear Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you all know, a number of independent states emerged following the disintegration of the USSR. However, though this is not your fault, most of you don't know that there is a Tatarstan, which plays an important role in reforming Russia today. Among the twenty former autonomous republics of the Russian Federation, Tatarstan was destined to lead the movement for reshaping the Russian Federation through both preventing the development of Russia along an imperial line and doing everything possible for benefiting from this historic opportunity to create a democratic Russian Federation.

Why Tatarstan? There are certain reasons for this. Tatarstan has always kept a very strong tradition of statehood, and the development of its relations with the Russian state have been very complicated. In the mid-XVI century, the Kazan Khanate, which was located in the territory of present-day Tatarstan, was conquered by Ivan the Terrible. Unlike the Russian lands that had already joined the Moscow state voluntarily, the Kazan Khanate was captured following a really dreadful battle. Certainly, this development left its imprint in the history of the Tatar-Russian relations. The second reason is that Tatarstan has a huge industrial-agricultural potential. Even in the former Soviet context, Tatarstan was among the first twelve republics in terms of economic development. The industrial potential of Tatarstan exceeded the potentials of the three Baltic states together. Naturally, this was also an important thing. Tatarstan possesses rich natural resources. More than 2,5 billion tons of oil have been extracted in the last fifty years. Because of this, there is a well-developed petrochemical industry in the republic. We produce large amounts of rubber and polyethylene. You know that KamAZ joint-stock company, which produces heavy-trucks, is located in Tatarstan as well. Furthermore, Tatarstan enjoys highly-developed aircraft and helicopter industries and also other industrial branches. Furthermore, Tatarstan fully meets its own agricultural demands. So, it is not surprising that we have harvested plentiful crops when the harvest rate has decreased throughout Russia for the last three years. Yes, we have enormous industrial potential. Yet, we used to live in such a system where the population could not take advantage of all these opportunities to make their lives better economically because of the over-centralised economy. This intensified the feeling of anger among the unemployed labour force.

I am an experienced official. As a former Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the TASSR, I could illustrate the over-centralisation of the economy by one obvious example. Without permission from Moscow, it was not possible even to set the fat content of traded milk. Hence, you can guess what kind of centralisation and arbitrary practices ruled in the regions. In 1985 - the year we had been awaiting for such a long time - the restructuring (perestroika) of the whole society started. No matter how we consider Mikhail Gorbachev today, he was the first man who had the courage to reform the old machine. Nevertheless, he met the fate of many unsuccessful reformers. We can definitely say that there is no way back. There could be some people who would like to go back to the Soviet system, it is impossible.

In the last few years, the people have realised that they are 'the people'. We had always wondered why the American state and the American people speak so much of human rights. I can even tell you that until perestroika we could not comprehend it. It is only now that we conceive how deep their significance is. This is what perestroika gave us. I think this is the most valuable thing. Nevertheless, people still face many problems resulting from the destruction of the former Soviet system. Now, I would like to revert to the main theme of my speech. When it became possible to speak freely about everything, the people gained an opportunity to recall their past and present. Significant changes occurred in the mentality of the people. The people in Tatarstan wondered why they had to live like that. They thought that they should be independent and have their own state. The process of restructuring (perestroika) of minds was developing very rapidly.

It should be said that the educational level of the people living in the Republic of Tatarstan is very high. Tatarstan and Kazan have always been the historical, cultural and scientific centre linking Europe and Asia. I was given the data about the number of students in Boston. This is really amazing! However, I can say the same thing about Kazan. We have some 1 million and 200 thousand people living in Kazan, and the one-tenth of all inhabitants of the city is a University student. This stems from our history. Moreover, 922 of every thousand people working in the production sector have higher or secondary education. Consequently, the whole multinational society started to voice their rights. In 1990, I was the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet (our parliament). Taking into account the will of our people, the Parliament adopted the Declaration on State Sovereignty and proclaimed Tatarstan a sovereign state. Since that moment the events ran much faster.

You know that in 1990 Boris El'tsin, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, visited Tatarstan. At the meeting he spelled a phrase that became a byword: 'You can take as much sovereignty as you can swallow'. And, it turned out that we actually managed to take a lot of sovereignty into our hands in the last few years. When the law on electing the first president of Russia was adopted in 1991, our parliament raised the issue of electing our own president to protect the sovereignty of Tatarstan. The elections for the presidents of Tatarstan and the President of the Russian Federation were scheduled for 12 June 1991. All the necessary conditions were created for the elections, and the first presidents of Tatarstan and the Russian Federation were elected on the same day. It should be said that on that day, the voters in Tatarstan did not participate in the elections for the President of the Russian Federation.

In 1992, as the process kept evolving, we organised a referendum on the state status of Tatarstan. The question was formulated as follows: 'Do you agree that Tatarstan is a sovereign state associated with the Russian Federation on the basis of a treaty on mutual delegation of powers'. When the referendum day was specified, we felt a real confrontation with Moscow. I do not want to blame any Russian leader personally, but they reactivated their old imperial mentality inherited from the totalitarian times in full force. How could the people dare to declare their sovereignty? But we were confident that it is nobody else but the people who can solve this problem. That is why we adopted the declaration of state sovereignty on behalf of the multinational people of Tatarstan. Just a few days before the referendum, the Russian Constitutional Court stated that it was an unlawful referendum

which should be abolished. The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation organised a hearing on the speech made by the speaker of our parliament. A group of Russian prosecutors were also sent to the republic. At that time, we had 2,611 polling stations; all the chairmen of these stations received a written notification stating that if they opened the polling stations, they would be sued. I still do not know the reason why, but Boris El'tsin, the President of Russia, addressed the people of Tatarstan on TV on the eve of the referendum in an attempt to dissuade the people from participating in the referendum, and to call for a boycott. He said that if the people of Tatarstan said 'yes' to the referendum question, it would possibly lead to bloodshed. On the same evening, I made my own appeal to the people after El'tsin's address. I explained the undemocratic character of his addressing. I said that it would be only through a positive answer to the referendum question that every family could enjoy peace and tranquillity. The next day after the referendum, I received the first data. All votes were counted, and over sixty percent of those who participated in the referendum said 'yes'. I am telling you this to show what a difficult way we had to go through to reach democracy.

Based on the outcomes of the referendum, we adopted the new Constitution of Tatarstan. We invited foreign experts, and their assessment is that the Constitution of Tatarstan is the Constitution of a democratic society which observes the human rights, the rights of nations, the rights of ownership, and that our economy is a socially-oriented market economy. I think the most important thing is that we declared two state languages: Russian and Tatar, and that the Constitution recognises the rights of all citizens of Tatarstan to have the citizenship of the Russian Federation. Today, I can say that those were the main stabilising factors. You know the events in Moldavia developed in the negative way just for one reason – they declared one state language. You also know that similar situations are also arising in Ukraine and in Kazakhstan. And I consider this to be the most important matter. The main thing which should be remembered here is that the Russian language is still a language of inter-ethnic communication. We declared two official languages yet, eventually, the native language will benefit from this, because it should be upgraded, and be given the conditions for its development. These are merely the words to remember for future young politicians sitting here.

As the time passed and the democratic processes developed, Russian and international public opinion gradually began to recognise everything that was accomplished in Tatarstan. For three years, we have conducted arduous negotiations with President El'tsin concerning the character of interrelations between Tatarstan and Russia. These were very hard days, but President El'tsin should be judged fairly. After three years of negotiations, we have succeeded in signing the Treaty on mutual delegation of powers, that corresponds to our Declaration of State Sovereignty. The Treaty is, undoubtedly, a bilateral document. We made mutual concessions. The principal thing is that we do not violate the integrity of the Russian Federation. And finally, we came to a formula that Tatarstan is united with the Russian Federation on the basis of this Treaty. While delimiting the authorities of the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan and the Russian Federation, the Treaty recognises both the Russian and the Tatarstan constitutions. At the same time, to implement this treaty, we signed fourteen intergovernmental agreements on the issues of property, military construction, banking, budgets, cadre training, et cetera.

I can say that the Treaty was apprehended with satisfaction by the majority, and it has resulted in complete stabilisation of the situation in the Republic. The main political meaning of the Treaty is that Russia, by signing the Treaty with the former autonomous republic, deprived itself of the possibility of developing itself as a unitary state. And I regard this Treaty to be to the benefit of both Russia and Tatarstan. There were so many antagonists of the Treaty. They blamed me. To a smaller degree, they also blamed President El'tsin. But, he could take this liberty to do so as a man adherent to democratic principles. A treaty between the Russian Federation and Bashkortostan was already signed, and treaties with other republics are under way. This means that true federation starts from below on a democratic basis. In my opinion, this is a great achievement, since Russia is a very peculiar country with respect to its national, ethnic, and territorial composition. It should be said that today economic reforms go on with difficulties. It is my personal opinion that the transition period is rather dragged on, it might have been shorter as well. And we as politicians, I also include myself in this category, have failed, from the very beginning, to work out a concept of transition towards market economy that would prevent a sharp decrease in people's living standards.

Everybody learns from his own mistakes, and tries to minimise them. We needed our own way of transition towards market economy. There is no other country in the world that transits to a market economy with such a monopolised economic base and centralised system of management, as had Russia and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. By now, under conditions of transition towards market, these monopolists, unfortunately, are still playing their role. Nevertheless, nowadays in economy the number of people with a market mentality is much more higher. Today the main thing is that working-people become proprietors, property has already been distributed among people. This demolishes the state monopoly and curtails state property. We believe that this process needs acceleration. It makes social processes irreversible at large.

As I said, we have currently been establishing very close economic relations with many large companies of some countries, including those of the United States. The opportunities for the Tatarstan economy are such that it is able to guarantee stability for any business on mutual interest basis. So, I invite young people as well as others to co-operate with Tatarstan, if they have this wish. We will support you by all means.

Thank you for your attention.

Source: Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev, 'The Future of the Russian Federation: A Look [sic] from Tatarstan', in *Suverennyi Tatarstan*, eds. Farid Kh. Mukhametshin and R. T. Ismailov, Moscow: Insan, 1997, pp.53-58. (This text is slightly edited in order to correct its grammatical errors and to make its English more understandable - OFT)

Appendix III. Tables of Election and Referendum Results

Table A3.1. Election and Referendum Turnouts in Tatarstan, 1991-1999

	Date	Russia-wide Turnout (%)	Tatarstan Turnout (%)
Referendum on the Preservation of the USSR	17 March 1991	75.4	77.1
Russian Presidential Elections	12 June 1991	74.66	36.59
Tatarstan Presidential Elections	12 June 1991	n.a.	63.4
Referendum on the Status of Tatarstan	21 March 1992	n.a.	81.7
Referendum on Boris El'tsin's Performance	25 April 1993	64.5	21.7
Russian Constitutional Referendum and State Duma Elections	12 December 1993	54.32	13.9
Russian Parliamentary Elections in Tatarstan	13 March 1994	n.a.	58.5
Elections for Tatarstan State Council	5 March 1995	n.a.	61.3
Russian State Duma Elections	17 December 1995	64.37	58.7
Tatarstan Presidential Elections	24 March 1996	n.a.	77.9
Russian Presidential Elections	16 June 1996	69.81	73.74
Russian Presidential Elections	3 July 1996	68.88	77.47
Russian State Duma Elections	19 December 1999	61.68	72.0

Source: Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, pp.298-303, and the website of the Russian Central Election Commission at <http://www.fci.ru/>.

Table A3.2. Referendum on the Preservation of the Soviet Union, 17 March 1991

Republics	Number of Voters	Turnout (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
RSFSR	79,701,169	75.4	71.3	26.4
Bashkiriia	2,719,637	81.7	85.9	12.1
Buriatiia	535,802	80.2	83.5	14.6
Checheno-Ingushetiia	419,012	58.8	75.9	22.6
Chuvashiia	748,420	83.1	82.4	15.1
Daghestan	812,009	80.5	82.6	16.2
Kabardino-Balkariia	372,607	76.1	77.9	20.8
Kalmykiia	169,124	82.6	87.8	10.5
Kareliia	418,101	75.8	76.0	22.2
Komi	543,403	62.8	76.0	22.0
Marii-El	418,599	79.6	79.6	18.5
Mordoviia	571,631	84.3	80.3	17.8
North Ossetiia	367,858	85.9	90.2	8.9
Tatariia	1,951,768	77.1	87.5	10.8
Tyva	138,496	80.6	91.4	6.8
Udmurtiia	819,140	74.3	76.0	22.0
Iakutiia	541,993	78.7	76.7	21.6

Source: *Pravda*, 27 March 1991.

Table A3.3. Russian Presidential Elections, 12 June 1991

Candidates	Russia-wide Votes (%)	Tatarstan Votes (%)
Boris N. El'tsin	58.56	44.97
Nikolai I. Ryzhkov	17.22	16.68
Vladimir V. Zhirinovskii	7.98	9.37
Aman G. Tuleev	6.96	11.54
Al'bert M. Makashov	3.82	5.77
Vadim V. Bakatin	3.50	4.52
Other Candidates and Invalid Votes	1.96	7.15

Sources: *Izvestiia*, 20 June 1991, and Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.300.

Table A3.4. Tatarstan Presidential Elections, 12 June 1991

Candidates	Votes (%)
Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev	70.6
Against All	29.3
Invalid	0.1

Source. Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.300.

Table A3.5. Referendum on the Status of Tatarstan, 21 March 1992

Question	Do you agree that the Republic of Tatarstan is a sovereign state, the subject of international law, forming its relations with the Russian Federation, other Republics and states on the basis of equal agreements?		
Votes	Number of Votes		Percentage of Votes
Yes	1,309,056		61.4
No	794,444		37.2
Invalid	28,851		1.4

Source: *Izvestiia*, 23 March 1992.

Table A3.6. Referendum on El'tsin's Performance, 25 April 1993

Questions	Russia-wide Votes (%)			Tatarstan Votes (%)		
	Yes	No	Invalid	Yes	No	Invalid
Do you have confidence in the President of the Russian Federation, Boris El'tsin?	58.7	39.2	2.1	66.4	30.5	3.1
Do you approve the socio-economic policies carried out by the President of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation since 1992?	53.0	44.6	2.4	61.4	35.1	3.5
Do you consider it necessary to hold early elections to the presidency of the Russian Federation?	49.5	47.1	3.4	9.8*	11.7*	n.a*
Do you consider it necessary to hold early elections of the Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation?	67.2	30.1	2.7*	15.8*	5.9*	n.a*

* The percentages of the votes for the third and fourth referendum questions in Tatarstan represent the share of these votes in the total number of eligible voters. The percentages of the Russia-wide votes and the votes for the first and second referendum questions in Tatarstan indicate the share of these votes in the total number of votes that were actually cast in the referendum.

Sources: *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 6 May 1993, and Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, pp.300-301.

Table A3.7. Russian Constitutional Referendum 12 December 1993

Question	Russia-wide Votes (%)			Tatarstan Votes (%)		
	Yes	No	Invalid	Yes	No	Invalid
Do you approve the Russian Constitution	58.4	41.5	0.1	71.9	24.1	4.0

Source: Pauline J. Luong, 'Tatarstan: Elite Bargaining and Ethnic Separatism', in *Growing Pains: Russian Democracy and the Election of 1993*, eds. Timothy J. Colton and Jerry F. Hough, Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1998, p.648.

Table A3.8. Russian State Duma Elections (Party Lists), 12 December 1993

Parties	Russia-wide Votes (%)	Tatarstan Votes (%)
Liberal Democratic Party of Russia	22.92	19.90
Russia's Choice	15.51	22.40
Communist Party of the Russian Federation	12.40	9.38
Women of Russia	8.13	7.66
Agrarian Party of Russia	7.99	2.12
Iabloko	7.86	11.55
Party of Russian Unity and Concord	6.76	8.54
Democratic Party of Russia	5.52	5.42
Other Parties and Invalid Votes	12.91	13.03

Source: *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 28 December 1993, p.1.

Table A3.9. Russian State Duma Elections in Tatarstan (Single Mandate Districts), 12 December 1993

Electoral Districts	Candidates	Party Affiliation	Votes (%)
Al'metevskii	Aleksandr V. Shtanin	Russia's Choice	6.5
Moskovskii	Vladimir A. Beliaev	Accord	16.7
Naberezhno-Chelninskii	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Nizhnekamskii	Vasilii P. Kobiakov	Equality and Legality	12
Privolzhskii	Valentin V. Mikhailov	Russia's Choice	21.2

Source: *Respublika Tatarstan*, 14 December 1993.

Table A3.10. Russian Parliamentary Elections in Tatarstan (Single Mandate Districts), 13 March 1994

Electoral Districts	Candidates	Party Affiliation	Votes (%)
Federation Council	Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev	Unity and Progress	91.2
Federation Council	Farid Kh. Mukhametshin	Unity and Progress	71.1
Al'metevskii	Gennadii V. Egorov	Unity and Progress	73.9
Moskovskii	Oleg V. Morozov	Unity and Progress	46.8
Naberezhno-Chelninskii	Vladimir N. Altykhov	Communist Party of Tatarstan	40.8
Nizhnekamskii	Gabdulvakhid G. Bagautdinov	Communist Party of Tatarstan	69.1
Privolzhskii	Valentin V. Mikhailov	Equality and Legality	23.9

Source: *Segodnia*, 17 March 1994.

Table A3.11. Russian State Duma Elections (Party Lists), 17 December 1995

Parties	Russia-wide Votes (%)	Tatarstan Votes (%)
Communist Party of the Russian Federation	22.3	15.42
Liberal Democratic Party of Russia	11.1	4.84
Our Home is Russia	10.1	28.62
Iabloko	6.9	4.07
Women of Russia	4.6	3.70
Communists-Workers' Russia	4.5	7.35
Party of Workers' Self-Government	4.0	3.37
Nur	0.5	5.00
Other Parties and Invalid Votes	35.0	26.63

Sources: *Moscow News*, 29 December 1995, p.2, and Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.301.

Table A3.12. Russian State Duma Elections in Tatarstan (Single Mandate Districts), 17 December 1995

Electoral Districts	Candidates	Party Affiliation
Al'metevskii	Azat K. Khamaev	Agrarian Party of Russia
Moskovskii	Oleg V. Morozov	Independent
Naberezhno-Chelninskii	Vladimir N. Altykhov	Independent
Nizhnekamskii	Gabdulvakhid G. Bagautdinov	Our Home is Russia
Privolzhskii	Sergei P. Shashurin	Independent

Source. Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.301.

Table A3.13. Tatarstan Presidential Elections, 24 March 1996

Candidates	Votes (%)
Mintimer Sh. Shaimiev	97.1
Against All	2.8
Invalid Votes	0.1

Source: Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.302.

Table A3.14. Russian Presidential Elections, 16 June 1996

Candidates	Russia-wide Votes (%)	Tatarstan Votes (%)
Boris N. El'tsin	35.79	38.34
Gennadii A. Ziuganov	32.49	38.10
Aleksandr I. Lebed	14.73	7.38
Grigorii A. Iavlinskii	7.45	6.90
Other Candidates and Invalid Votes	9.54	9.28

Sources: *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 22 June 1996, and Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.302.

Table A3.15. Russian Presidential Elections, 3 July 1996

Candidates	Russia-wide Votes (%)	Tatarstan Votes (%)
Boris N. El'tsin	54.39	61.45
Gennadii A. Ziuganov	40.73	32.31
Against All and Invalid Votes	5.88	7.24

Source: Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vybory i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vybory v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.302.

Table A3.16. Russian State Duma Elections (Party Lists), 19 December 1999

Parties	Russia-wide Votes (%)	Tatarstan Votes (%)
Communist Party of the Russian Federation	24.29	18.1
Unity	23.32	15.7
Fatherland-All Russia	13.33	40.1
Union of Rightist Powers	8.52	5.2
Liberal Democratic Party of Russia	5.98	3.8
Iabloko	5.93	4.5
Our Home is Russia	1.19	0.1
Other Candidates and Invalid Votes	17.44	12.5

Source: Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vyborny i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vyborny v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.302.

Table A3.17. Russian State Duma Elections in Tatarstan (Single Mandate Districts), 19 December 1999

Electoral Districts	Candidates	Party Affiliation	Votes (%)
Al'metevskii	Fandas Sh. Safiullin	Fatherland-All Russia	55.47
Moskovskii	Oleg V. Morozov	Fatherland-All Russia	45.23
Naberezhno-Chelninskii	Khalimkhan M. Akhmetkhanov	Communist Party of the Russian Federation	27.06
Nizhnekamskii	Fliura G. Ziatdinova	Fatherland-All Russia	49.78
Privolzhskii	Sergei P. Shashurin	Independent	21.08

Source: Sergei A. Sergeev, 'Vyborny i referendumy v Respublike Tatarstan, 1989-2000', in *Osobaia zona: Vyborny v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Valentin V. Mikhailov, Valentin V. Bazhanov and Midkhat Kh. Farukshin, Ul'ianovsk, Mezhdunarodnoi Pravozaashchitnoi Assamblei, 2000, p.302.

Appendix IV. Tables of Statistics and Sociological Surveys

Table A4.1. The Ethnic Composition of the Republics of Russia, 1989

Republics	Population	Titular nationality (%)	Russians (%)
Adygeia	446,800	22.0	68.0
Altai	196,700	31.0	60.4
Bashktostan	4,042,000	22.0	40.0
Buriatiia	1,056,600	24.0	69.0
Checheno-Ingushetiia ¹	1,235,000	70.7	23.1
Chuvashiia	1,359,000	67.8	26.7
Dagestan ²	1,925,000	80.2	12.0
Kabardino-Balkariia ³	785,900	58.6	32.0
Kalmykiia	321,700	45.4	37.7
Karachai-Cherkessiia ⁴	434,000	41.0	42.0
Kareliia	799,600	11.0	72.0
Khakassiia	583,000	11.5	80.0
Komi	1,246,000	23.3	57.5
Marii-El	764,000	43.0	48.0
Mordoviia	963,800	32.5	60.8
North Ossetiia	651,000	53.0	29.9
Sakha (Iakutiia)	1,074,000	33.4	50.3
Tatarstan	3,723,000	48.5	43.3
Tyva	306,000	64.3	32.0
Udmurtiia	1,642,800	30.9	58.9
TOTAL	21,161,000	48.7	51.3

¹Chechens comprised 57.8 percent and Ingush made-up 12.9 percent of the total population.

²The peoples of Dagestan are composed of Agul (0.8 percent); Avar (27.5 percent); Dargin (15.6 percent); Kumyk (12.9 percent); Lak (5.1 percent); Lezgin (11.3 percent); Nogai (1.6 percent); Rutul (0.8 percent); Tabasaran (4.3 percent) and Tsakhur (0.3 percent).

³Kabards formed 49 percent and Balkars constituted 9.6 percent of the population.

⁴Karachai formed 31 percent and Cherkess constituted 10 percent of the population.

Source: Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, 2nd ed., London: Routledge, 1996, p.34.

Table A4.2. The Ethnic Composition of Tatarstan, 1989

Ethnic Groups	Population	Percentage of Tatarstan's Population
Tatar	1 765 400	48.5
Russian,	1 575 400	43.3
Chuvash	134 200	3.7
Ukrainians	32 800	0.9
Mordvins	28 900	0.8
Udmurts	24 800	0.7
Mari	19 400	0.5
Bashkirs	19 100	0.5
Total	3,754,800	100

Source: Marat R. Mustafin and Rashid G. Khuzeev, *Vse o Tatarstane: Ekonomiko-geograficheskii spravochnik*, Kazan: Kazanskoe Knizhnoe Izd-vo, 1994, p.18.

Table A4.3. The Geographical Distribution of Tatars, 1989

Countries	Tatar Population	Percentage of total local population
The Russian Federation	5,552,000	3.8
Tatarstan	1,765,400	48.5
Bashkortostan	1,120,702	35.1
Tiumen Oblast	227,422	7.3
Cheliabinsk	224,605	6.2
Sverdlovsk	183,781	4.0
Ul'ianovsk	159,093	1.1
Moscow	157,376	1.7
Orenburg	158,564	7.3
Perm	150,469	4.8
Kuibyshev	115,280	3.5
Udmurtiia	110,490	6.0
Khanti-Mansi	97,689	7.6
Penza	81,307	5.0
Astrakhan	71,655	7.2
Uzbekistan*	468,000	2.4
Kazakhstan*	328,000	2.0
Ukraine*	87,000	0.2
Tajikistan*	72,000	1.4
Kyrgyzstan*	70,000	1.6
China	5,000-10,000	-
Turkey	5,000-10,000	-
Romania and Bulgaria	5,000-10,000	-
Poland	5,000	-
Finland	1,500-2,000	-
The United States of America	1,500-2,000	-

* The number of the Tatars in Ukraine and Central Asia include Crimean Tatars as well as a small number of Volga Tatars.

Source: Katherine E. Graney, 'The Volga Tatars: Diasporas and the Politics of Federalism', in *Nations Abroad: Diaspora Politics and International Relations in the Former Soviet Union*, eds. Charles King and Neil J. Melvin, Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1999, p.157.

Table A4.4. The Ethnic Origins of Enterprise Managers in the Autonomous Republics of the RSFSR, 1989

Republics	Percentage of Titular Nation	Percentage of Titular Nation's Executives	Index of Executives
Buriatiia	24.0	36.7	1.53
Tatariia	48.6	64.1	1.32
Mordoviia	32.5	37.9	1.17
Iakutiia	33.4	38.2	1.14
Bashkiriia	21.9	24.2	1.11
Kalmykiia	45.4	48.1	1.06
Checheno-Ingushetiia	70.7	71.5	1.01
Dagestan	83.4	83.8	1.00
Udmurtiia	30.9	30.8	1.00
Kareliia	10.0	9.0	0.90
Chuvashiia	67.8	59.2	0.87
Komi	23.3	18.3	0.79
Tyva	64.3	39.6	0.62
Marii-El	43.3	26.4	0.61
Russian Regions	81.5	77.3	0.95

Source: Lev S. Perepelkin, 'Istoki mezhetnicheкого konflikta v Tatarii', *Mir Rossii*, vol.1, no.1, 1992, pp.91-112 (105).

Table A4.5. The Ethnic Composition of Urban Workforce in Tatarstan, 1992

Employment Sector	Tatars	Russians
Government	0.5	0.3
Public Services	1.2	0.8
Infrastructure	5.6	6.8
Engineering	34.1	41.6
Science and Education	13.1	14.1
Literature and Press	0.7	0.3
Arts	1.2	0.8
Unqualified Jobs	43.6	35.3
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Rashid Akhmetov, 'Elita Tatar. K postanovke problemy', in *Sovremennye natsional'nye protsessy v Respublike Tatarstan*, eds. Damir M. Iskhakov and Rozalina N. Musina, Kazan: IlaLII KNTs RAN, 1992, p.126.

Table A4.6. Change in the Ethnic Composition of Tatarstan's Political Elites between 1993 and 1996

Type of Elites	1993			1996			Change (%)		
	Tatar	Russian	Other	Tatar	Russian	Other	Tatar	Russian	Other
President									
%	100	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-
(No)	(1)			(1)					
Vice-President									
%	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-100	-
(No)		(1)							
Prime Minister									
%	100	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-
(No)	(1)			(1)					
Speaker of the Parliament									
%	100	-	-	-	100	-	-100	+100	
(No)	(1)				(1)				
Members of the Parliament									
%	58	38	4	73	25	2	+15	-13	-2
(No)	(145)	(95)	(10)	(91)	(31)	(2)			
Cabinet of Ministers and Heads of State Committees									
%	71	23	6	68	29	3	-3	+6	-3
(No)	(37)	(12)	(3)	(26)	(11)	(1)			
Heads of City and Raion Administrations									
%	77	19	4	77	19	4	-	-	-
(No)	(40)	(10)	(2)	(40)	(10)	(2)			
Top-Level Judiciary Positions									
%	75	25	-	75	25	-	-	-	-
(No)	(3)	(1)		(3)	(1)				

Sources: Evgenii A. Lisin, *et.al.*, *Kto est' kto v Respublike Tatarstan*, Kazan: Gazetno-zhurnal'noe izd-vo, 1993, Evgenii A. Lisin, *et.al.*, *Kto est' kto v Respublike Tatarstan*, Kazan: Star, 1996, and Nail M. Mukhariaimov, 'Khronika politicheskogo protsessa (1988-1998)', in *Regiony Rossii: Khronika i rukovoditeli. Tom.7*, ed. Kimitaka Matsuzato, Sapporo, Japan: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, 2000, pp.20-115.

Table A4.7. Change in the Ethnic Composition of Tatarstan's Economic and Cultural Elites between 1993 and 1996

Type of Elites	1993			1996			Change (%)		
	Tatar	Russian	Other	Tatar	Russian	Other	Tatar	Russian	Other
ECONOMIC ELITES									
Industrial Sector Managers									
%	48	48	2	42	46	12	-6	-2	+8
(No)	(24)	(24)	(2)	(38)	(42)	(11)			
Agricultural Sector Managers									
%	73	27	-	73	21	6	-	-6	+6
(No)	(11)	(4)		(28)	(8)	(2)			
Financial Sector Managers									
%	56	35	9	75	17	8	+19	-18	-1
(No)	(13)	(8)	(2)	(9)	(2)	(1)			
Other Sector Managers									
%	41	56	3	41	51	8	-	-5	+5
(No)	(16)	(22)	(1)	(17)	(21)	(3)			
CULTURAL ELITES									
Science and Culture									
%	43	48	9	60	29	11	+17	-19	+2
(No)	(9)	(10)	(2)	(80)	(39)	(15)			
Press									
%	69	25	6	75	20	5	+6	-5	-1
(No)	(11)	(4)	(1)	(15)	(4)	(1)			

Sources: Evgenii A. Lisin, *et.al.*, *Kto est' kto v Respublike Tatarstan*, Kazan: Gazetno-zhurnal'noe izd-vo, 1993, and Evgenii A. Lisin, *et.al.*, *Kto est' kto v Respublike Tatarstan*, Kazan: Star, 1996.

Table A4.8. Assessments of Economic Status and Ethnic Discrimination among the Working Age Populations of Tatarstan, North Ossetiia and Sakha, 1997-1998.

	Tatarstan		North Ossetiia		Sakha	
	Tatars	Russians	Ossetins	Russian	Yakuts	Russians
A. Sense of Individual Discrimination						
Experienced Ethnic Discrimination						
%	4.2	9.5	1.4	13.0	10.6	13.4
(No)	(331)	(295)	(357)	(193)	(369)	(402)
Experienced Hostile Treatment due to Nationality						
%	5.1	16.6	3.1	30.7	24.3	21.8
(No)	336	290	356	192	358	403
B. Sense of Collective Discrimination						
Nationality is Important to Get Good Jobs						
%	18.3	62.2	23.8	69.7	31.0	58.5
(No)	328	283	345	118	345	395
Nationality Is Important to Get Government Posts						
%	28.9	68.1	20.8	72.2	32.0	72.4
(No)	329	279	341	187	338	392
Other Nationalities are Favoured for Good Jobs						
%	2.0	63.9	2.6	74.7	25.3	59.1
(No)	302	244	308	162	296	347
Other Nationalities are Favoured for Government Posts						
%	4.1	72.3	1.0	76.3	8.8	75.3
(No)	316	264	308	169	307	364

Source: Donna Bahry, 'Ethnicity and Equality in Post-communist Economic Transition: Evidence from Russia's Republics', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.54, no.5, 2002, p. 690.

Table A4.9. Civic Identities in the Republics of Russia, 1993

Question: Of what polity do you consider yourself a representative?

Republics	Ethnic Group (respondents)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Bashkiriia	Bashkir (211)	25	18	48	4	1	4
	Russian (401)	5	6	51	23	12	3
	Tatar (259)	20	14	52	6	2	6
Buriatiia	Buriat (248)	28	25	40	2	2	3
	Russian (728)	5	5	42	22	21	5
Checheno-Ingushetiia	Chechen (588)	77	10	11	1	-	1
	Ingush (104)	14	41	45	-	-	-
	Russian (211)	8	11	51	18	6	6
Chuvashiia	Chuvash(377)	14	9	57	7	5	8
	Russian (230)	2	2	35	32	26	3
Daghestan	Avar (291)	35	15	44	-	0	6
	Dargin (140)	29	26	31	-	-	14
	Kumyk (162)	40	15	37	6	1	1
	Lezgin (107)	31	8	44	3	5	9
	Laks (83)	25	14	51	-	-	10
	Russian (103)	23	17	50	3	2	5
	Russian (103)	23	17	50	3	2	5
Kabardino-Balkariia	Kabardin (268)	22	25	47	1	0	5
	Balkar (112)	15	21	52	2	-	10
	Russian (316)	4	4	58	18	8	8
Kalmykiia	Kalmyk (502)	27	19	49	2	1	2
	Russian (396)	8	7	67	7	8	3
Kareliia	Karel (204)	12	15	60	4	4	5
	Russian (636)	5	7	55	17	12	4
Komi	Komi (273)	22	15	48	4	3	8
	Russian (593)	5	6	43	22	17	7
Mari	Mari (354)	12	12	59	5	5	7
	Russian (538)	6	3	56	17	13	5
Mordoviia	Mordva (291)	17	11	48	7	10	7
	Russian (624)	7	7	39	20	20	7
North Ossetiia	Osset (524)	19	18	57	2	1	3
	Russian (303)	5	8	58	13	10	6
Tatarstan	Tatar (478)	33	19	34	2	1	11
	Russian (446)	8	7	49	18	10	8
Tyva	Tyvin (653)	42	22	33	1	1	1
	Russian (307)	3	4	52	27	13	1
Udmurtiia	Udmurt (315)	17	12	60	4	2	5
	Russian (612)	5	6	43	22	18	6
Iakutiia	Iakut (377)	38	21	39	1	-	1
	Russian (463)	8	9	56	14	8	5

1. Only My Republic; 2- More My Republic than Russia; 3- Equally My Republic and Russia 4-More Russia than My Republic; 5- Only Russia; 6- No answer.

Source: Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, London: Sage, 1997, p.262.

Table A4.10. Soviet Identity in the Republics of Russia, 1993

Question: How do you evaluate the break-up of the USSR ?

Republics	Ethnic Group (respondents)	1	2	3	4	5
Bashkiriia	Bashkir (211)	6	10	22	47	15
	Russian (401)	8	12	25	40	15
	Tatar (259)	6	9	27	45	13
Buriatiia	Buriat (248)	6	14	26	35	19
	Russian (728)	6	9	28	45	12
Checheno-Ingushetiia	Chechen (588)	12	9	29	44	6
	Ingush (104)	7	8	36	47	2
	Russian (211)	3	6	26	61	4
Chuvashiia	Chuvash(377)	5	6	19	54	16
	Russian (230)	4	7	24	48	17
Daghestan	Avar (291)	9	12	12	48	19
	Dargin (140)	6	3	14	44	33
	Kumyk (162)	4	5	16	36	39
	Lezgin (107)	2	2	12	68	16
	Laks (83)	7	-	17	58	18
	Russian (103)	4	6	26	51	13
	Russian (103)	4	6	26	51	13
Kabardino-Balkariia	Kabardin (268)	7	8	23	54	8
	Balkar (112)	5	4	20	62	9
	Russian (316)	4	6	24	61	5
Kalmykiia	Kalmyk (502)	9	14	25	44	8
	Russian (396)	9	8	21	55	7
Kareliia	Karel (204)	11	12	15	40	22
	Russian (636)	10	17	20	37	16
Komi	Komi (273)	7	7	22	44	20
	Russian (593)	6	13	26	41	14
Mari	Mari (354)	5	5	24	46	20
	Russian (538)	6	7	21	53	13
Mordoviia	Mordva (291)	6	8	24	53	9
	Russian (624)	5	8	28	54	5
North Ossetiia	Osset (524)	3	7	16	68	6
	Russian (303)	4	5	17	65	9
Tatarstan	Tatar (478)	15	15	22	26	22
	Russian (446)	9	8	28	40	15
Tyva	Tyvin (653)	10	18	30	26	16
	Russian (307)	8	14	34	39	5
Udmurtiia	Udmurt (315)	8	7	26	44	15
	Russian (612)	8	15	28	39	10
Iakutiia	Iakut (377)	15	25	21	19	20
	Russian (463)	8	18	32	32	10

1- Good; 2- More Good than Bad; 3- More Bad than Good; 4- Bad; 5- No answer.

Source: Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, London: Sage, 1997, p.253.

Table A4.11. Perceptions of Motherland in the Republics of Russia, 1993

Question: Of what state do you consider yourself to be a citizen?

Republics	Ethnic (respondents)	Group	Soviet Union	Russia	Republic	No answer
Bashkiriia	Bashkir (211)		11	12	75	2
	Russian (401)		26	43	28	3
	Tatar (259)		22	17	60	1
Buriatiia	Buriat (248)		13	17	67	3
	Russian (728)		20	50	25	5
Checheno-Ingushetiia	Chechen (588)		8	1	90	1
	Ingush (104)		9	1	88	2
	Russian (211)		40	20	37	3
Chuvashiia	Chuvash (377)		42	20	35	3
	Russian (230)		26	52	19	3
Daghestan	Avar (291)		21	11	63	5
	Dargin (140)		16	4	64	16
	Kumyk (162)		14	5	72	10
	Lezgin (107)		41	2	50	7
	Laks (83)		34	7	43	16
	Russian (103)		47	25	21	7
Kabardino-Balkariia	Kabardin (268)		9	4	85	2
	Balkar (112)		28	4	65	3
	Russian (316)		33	36	27	4
Kalmykiia	Kalmyk (502)		21	9	68	2
	Russian (396)		34	32	30	4
Kareliia	Karel (204)		11	17	69	3
	Russian (636)		17	44	36	3
Komi	Komi (273)		17	14	65	4
	Russian (593)		24	46	24	6
Mari	Mari (354)		16	17	64	3
	Russian (538)		27	41	29	3
Mordoviia	Mordva (291)		33	29	35	3
	Russian (624)		32	40	26	2
North Ossetiia	Osset (524)		22	7	69	2
	Russian (303)		27	32	37	4
Tatarstan	Tatar (478)		18	4	74	4
	Russian (446)		29	31	36	4
Tyva	Tyvin (653)		2	2	95	1
	Russian (307)		16	59	24	1
Udmurtiia	Udmurt (315)		18	18	60	4
	Russian (612)		25	44	28	3
Iakutiia	Iakut (377)		9	3	87	1
	Russian (463)		18	38	39	5

Source: Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, London: Sage, 1997, p.270.

Table A4.12. Interethnic Relations between Tatars and Russians in Tatarstan, 1994

	Tatars	Russians
Have you experienced violation of your rights because of your nationality?		
Yes, often	3.5	1.7
Yes, sometimes	18.0	16.9
No, not at all	68.8	77.2
No answer	9.7	4.2
Are you willing to accept a person of another nationality as		
Citizen of Your Republic	77.0	83.7
Partner in Common Experience	61.0	74.1
Your Boss	46.0	59.0
Neighbour	68.7	80.2
Friend in common leisure and entertainment	56.4	71.1
Mother/ father of your children	31.8	54.3
Spouse	25.7	47.7
Other	7.0	10.5
How do you estimate inter-ethnic relations in your republic?		
Favourable	15.1	11.0
Calm	65.4	62.0
Tense	7.6	15.1
Critical, explosive	0.5	0.3
No Answer	11.4	11.6

Source: Valerii A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, London: Sage, 1997, pp.112-113.

Table A4.13. The Level of Religiosity among Several Ethnic Groups in the Middle Volga and the North Caucasus, 1996

Level of religiosity	Believe and practice	Only believe	Equivocal	Tolerant atheist	Fight religion	Number of respondents
Chechens	73	27	0	0	0	595
Ayars	74	20	3	4	0	320
Kabardins	24	65	8	3	0	463
Balkars	16	66	4	13	1	103
Tatars	26	30	15	29	1	432
Bashkirs	25	31	16	28	0	213
Russians	9	28	19	43	1	6010

Source: Susan Goodrich-Lehmann, 'Islam and Ethnicity in the Republics of Russia', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.13, no.1, 1997, p.83.

Table A4.14. Key Characteristics of Russianness, 1995

Characteristics	(%)
To love Russia and view it as a homeland	87
To know and love Russian culture	84
To have Russian as native language	80
To regard oneself as a Russian	79
To have a Russian citizenship	59
To be identified as Russian in an internal passport	24
To have Russian parents	24
To have Russian physical appearance	22

Source: Igor M. Kliamkin and Viktor V. Lapkin, ‘Russkii vopros v Rossii’, *Politicheskie issledovaniia*, vol.6, no.5, 1995, p.87.

Table A4.15. The Russian Attitudes towards Several Post-Soviet Secessionist Movements, 1992

Question: Several republics want their independence. Should they be allowed?

Republics	Allowed Unconditionally (%)	Allowed on Certain Conditions (%)	Prevented (%)	Can't Say (%)
Tatarstan	23	33	25	19
Chechniia	33	32	16	19
South Ossetiia	30	32	16	22
Trans-Dyniestriia	29	31	19	21
Abkhaziia	31	33	15	21

Source: Matthew Wyman, *Public Opinion in Post-Communist Russia*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997, p.170.

Table A4.16. Russian Views of Its Minorities, January 1993

Question: Have you formed a positive or negative attitude toward, for example

Ethnic Groups	Negative	Positive	No Answer
Ukrainians	3	67	30
Jews	8	56	36
Tatars	11	53	36
Moldavians	7	47	46
Latvians	7	47	46
Armenians	34	37	29
Georgians	33	36	31
Gypsies	33	31	36
Chechens	40	27	33
Azerbaijanis	46	26	28

Source: *Moskovskii komsomolets*, 12 January 1993, p. 2.

Table A4.17. Russian Views of Its Minorities, October 1993

Question: How do you relate to..., for example

Ethnic Groups	Negative	Positive	No Answer
Chechens	48	35	17
Gypsies	48	39	13
Azerbaijanis	43	43	14
Armenians	45	41	14
Uzbeks	20	61	19
Estonians	16	64	20
Jews	17	68	15
Tatars	13	71	16
Ukrainians	7	81	22
Russians	2	91	7

Source: 'Ierarkhiia etnicheskikh stereotipov naseleniia', in *Intertsentr VTsIOM Ekonomicheskie i sotsial'nye peremeny: Monitoring obshchestvennogo mneniia*, no.1, 1994, pp.17-19.

